

A
G U I D E
T O
ETERNITY:
Extracted out of the
W R I T I N G S
O F T H E
HOLY FATHERS
And Ancient
P H I L O S O P H E R S.

Written Originally in *Latin*,
By *JOHN BONA*.
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THE Author to the Reader.



*T*is the end of this Preface, to encounter two Objections, which I expect shall be charged upon me: First, Why does he not practise what he recommends, and quit the World himself, before he takes upon him to teach others the Way to Heaven? Secondly, What News does he tell us? Truly, no more than what we have a thousand times over, and better in other Authors: And this, with a strange kind of Temerity and Confidence, he is willing to impose upon us for his own.

My Answer is (in the Words of a wise Man: (Horace.)

—Fungor vice Cotis, acutum
Reddere quæ Ferrum valet, exors ipsa
secandi.

My Bus'ness is to whet, not cut.

Or if I may take up the Words of another great Man: I look upon the whole World, but as one large Hospital; and upon my self, not as a Doctor, but one of the Patients.

The Author to the Reader.

tients. If I can contribute any Thing to a publick Good, it's well. But however, while I write this, I am but talking to my self, and I make my Reader my Confidant. *I do not pretend to be a teaching Master, but a teaching Scholar. I am desirous to learn of others even when I instruct my self; for he that teaches, learns.*

As to the second Objection, I shall prevent it by a most ingenuous Confession of the naked Truth. There is very little of this Discourse, that I can honestly call my own. The greatest Part of it, is what I have gather'd out of the Holy Fathers, and Ancient Philosophers: And somewhat I have added out of my own Experience, which I have wrought together into one Confection; a good deal of it in the very Words of the Author; and the rest in my own Stile, plain and accommodate to all Capacities; for my Busines is not Rhetorick, but good Life. And in order to that blessed End, I have here drawn up a Compendium of moral Institutions and Counsels (the best I could) out of the Writings of the Fathers, Seneca, Epictetus, Antoninus, and others of the Ancients, both Christian and Pagan. What I have found effectual in my own Case, I have here communicated for the Benefit of others; without so much as saying where I had it, without clogging my Paper with Citations, or playing the Orator. My Design is to work up

The Author to the Reader.

on the Passions, not the Fancy ; and if the Physick be proper, no matter for the Plainness of it, or who mingled the Potion. I might have enlarged, and I might have express'd my self much better. But a few Precepts that are ready and at Hand, are much more profitable to us, than whole Volumes that over-charge the Memory, and leave us at a Loss where to find them, when we have Occasion to use them. He that knows what belongs to his Salvation, has learned what is sufficient. I wish with all my Soul, that this poor Essay (such as it is) may conduce to a publick Good ; but however, that it may not rise in Judgment against the Author, for not conforming in his Life to his Precepts.



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A

G U I D E T O E T E R N I T Y.

C H A P. I.

Of Man's last End. The Danger of neglecting or mistaking it. The Means and Method of attaining it.



HE thing I have propounded in this Discourse, is to bring the Reader to Heaven, that is to say, unto that perfect State of Bliss to which we are all directed by a Natural Impulse, as the principal End of our Being; and wherein there remains nothing further to be desired. As to the matter of Happiness; it is the

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common wish and business of Mankind; but such is the Blindness of our depraved condition, that instead of the True and Sovereign Good, we apply our selves to vain Appearances and Counterfeits. Some will have it to be in Wanting of Nothing, and consequently in Riches: Others place it in Dominion and Power: Some again, in Volutuousness and Pleasure, a mean and most ignoble Mistake. Thus we labour and toil to no purpose, and (like men in a wrong way) the more haste we make, the further from our Journey's end; hardly in any thing more unhappy, than in not being sensible of our Unhappiness.

II. And this, in truth, is our great Misfortune, that we purpose we know not what. Every Man would fain live and die Happy: But what true Happiness is, or how to compass it, there is not one in a thousand that understands. So that in all our Actions, Wishes and Endeavours we cross our selves, without any regard to that Immense Good, which ought to be the only and ultimate Object of our Consideration. The Lite we lead is like that of the Pismire, a perpetual and fruitless Ramble and Agitation; one while up, and another while down, and still empty. The great Creator of all things made Man out of Nothing, and he that gave us all, expects all, and to be beloved and serv'd without a Rival, as the Author of our Being: And it is all but time lost, that we employ any other way. And yet, alas! how small a part of our Thoughts and Actions do we bestow upon that God unto whom the whole ought to be directed! A Christian should do in his life, as a Traveller does upon the way: He propounds to go to such a Place, to take up his Rest when he comes there, and so makes every step he sets an advance

advance towards it. The only *Resting-Place* we can promise to our selves is Heaven, and we are to bend all our Motions and Studies that way. Whatsoever withdraws us from it, mis-leads us to our eternal Destruction.

III. We ought to behave our selves in this life, as in a Sea-voyage; when the Ship stops for fresh Water, a Man goes ashore, and entertains himself with shells and trifles by the by, but his mind is still at Sea, and so soon as ever the Master calls, away he goes, leaves all, and returns to the Vessel. So in the use and enjoyment of external things, (which are but shells and trifles) we are still to hearken after the Call of our Master, and never to be so intent upon this World, as to forget the business of the next. Outward things serve us, to the end that we may serve God; without which we fall from the Divine Unity, and by giving up our selves to many unnecessary things, we set up as many Idols, as there are Creatures which we love with an inordinate Affection, unto which, by a foul Sacrilege, we offer up (not an Ox or a Goat, but) our selves, and our Salvation. God will have no sharers, and it is against the Law of Love, to love any thing with him, but in him, and for him. It is no less than Damnation, to leave the Creator, and adhere to the Creature.

IV. We may say of Minds, as the Prince of Physicians says of impure Bodies: *The more Meat you give them, the more hurt you do them.* For in passing from an ill habit to a better, the Poison of a wicked life must be first vomited up, to prepare the Mind for receiving the more effectual Aliments of Virtue; which Purgation is to be wrought after this manner: There must be a kind of Expiation of Sins committed; all Affections towards

4 A Guide to Eternity.

them withdrawn, all evil Customs rooted out, all vicious Inclinations and unruly Appetites are to be subjected to the Government of Reason: The Flesh is to be kept under; the Necessities of Nature are to be provided for with Moderation; the Tongue and the Senses are to be bridled; and whatsoever may give a check or interruption to the speedy gaining of Virtue is to be utterly extermimated. And why should not all this be done? Where's the difficulty we fancy? What are we afraid of? A thing that we have in our own power: (He assisting us indeed, who is all in all, and our beginning and end.) But we must first go out from our selves, before we can come at him, and the further we remove from the one, the nearer will our approach be to the other.

V. In the first place, we are to resolve within our selves, whither we are to go, and what it is we would have. The next Point will be, to learn out the Way; and then to take notice from time to time how we proceed, and what progress we make in our Passage. In order to this, we are impartially to examine our Consciences, and observe the difference betwixt what we are, and what we ought to be. It will be too late to consider, when we are in the Snare. We are to study how to tame our raging Lusts; how to curb our tormenting Fears: We are to enure our selves to the contempt of earthly things, by leaving them, before they leave us, and to part willingly with what we cannot long possess; to the end, that when our last Hour comes, there may be the less Matter even for Death it self to work upon. But whatever else we do, let us be sure to look to the Man; and see that the Soul, which is first in Excellence, be not last in our Care and Esteem.

What

What will it profit a Man to gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? There can be no gain, where there is loss of Salvation.

CHAP. II.

He that would live well, let him chuse a good Tutor. The Qualities of such a Tutor, and the Duties of the Pupil.

I. **A**S the Service of God is the chief End of the very Being of Man; so is there not any thing more necessary for him that would make his Duty his Business, than to apply himself to the Counsel and Government of a Prudent Master. Does any Man venture to travel in an unknown Way without a Guide? Or so much as to take up a difficult Trade without an Instructor? There may be indeed some General Rules set down in writing for the benefit of the Absent, or of Posterity; but in particulars of When and How, there is no advising at a distance; nor without taking in all the Circumstances, and deliberating with the things themselves. It is in the Diseases of the Mind, as in those of the Body: A Physician can never prescribe so properly to his Patient, what Diet, what Physick, by Letter, as by Word of Mouth, upon feeling of the Pulse, and inquiring into the State and Accidents of his Distemper. And this holds as well in the Maladies of the Soul. Some there are, which are not to be redressed, nor in truth discover'd, but upon a Personal Conference and Observation. St. Paul himself (the designed Doctor of the Gentiles) was sent to *Ananias,*

nias, after his Conversion, that he might learn from him the way of Life. He that undertakes, upon his own single Strength, to overcome the Perverseness of corrupt Nature, to wrestle with Spiritual Impieties, and to break through all Obstacles and Impediments, to make his way to Virtue, will find it a hard and a laborious Task. It will concern us therefore, to call in some charitable Assistant to our Aid, that may lay open to us the Dangers we are to encounter, the Frauds and Stratagems of the Enemy, and teach us how to win the Field in the Day of Battel. If you ask what kind of Man must this be? Let him be a Person of Wisdom and Fidelity: One that has both a Will and a Power to do us good: One for whom we have a Reverence without Dread: One that seeks rather our Amendment than our Punishment, and that lives better than he speaks. He that preaches one thing, and does another, is not worthy of this Trust.

II. He must be no Flatterer neither; no Cajoler of the People, on the one hand, nor a frequenter of Great Mens Tables, or the Courts of Princes, on the other. I would have him as well skill'd in Manners, as the Goldsmith is in Monies; shew him any Coin, any Affection, he shall tell you what it is; or like an experienc'd Physician, presently make a Judgment of the Disease, and prescribe you the Remedy. Such a one he must be, as is able to dive into the Secrets and Recesses of the Inward Man, and to suit himself to the Humours and Dispositions of those he has to do withal, in order to their Spiritual Advantage. One that is not transported by his Passions, but teaches and invites Offenders in the Spirit of Meekness; One that has learn'd how to detect, and disappoint all

all the Artifices and Crafts of the Devil: One to whom a Man may securely commit the most recondite Privacies of his Soul, and confess himself without a Blush: One, in fine, that can distinguish betwixt good and evil. And *happy is he that finds such a Treasure.*

III. With such a Friend we are to communicate in all Conditions, and upon all Occasions, without any Scruple or Reserve, and to take his Opinion along with us in all Cases, whether good or evil. Now we are to conjure him to tell us freely of our Faults, wherein we do amiss, without any sort of Difficulty. And when he spares us, as if we had none, we are not presently to take for granted, that we are innocent: But rather to impute his Silence, either to his Lothness to disoblige us, or to his Despair of reforming us. And we are then to press him with more earnestness, and to shew him by our Actions, the desire we have to profit by his Reproofs, and to square our Lives for the future according to his Direction. It will be a good sign, if we love him the better for his Reprehensions, and take delight in them: When we are come to that pass once, we shall still part with him, either better than he found us, or in a fair way to it. *In the Distempers of the Mind, it goes far, if one has but a good Will to be cur'd.*

IV. These are the mutual Offices of the Master, and of the Scholar; that the one be well dispos'd to confer a benefit, and the other to receive it: And truly the former can hardly fail, without the extream Obstiny, Impatience, or Incapacity of the latter. There are some People so over-conceited of their own Abilities, that they will never endure to be advis'd by any Body else. *All this (they cry) is no more than what I could have told you:*

you: To what purpose do you trouble me with what I knew before? But I say, on the other side, that it is to very great purpose. There are many things we know, which we do not at all times so well heed and consider; and in such Cases, the Admonition is not so much intended to inform the Understanding, as to quicken the Memory; and rather to do the Office of a Remembrancer, than of a Tutor. In other Cases, there is nothing so evident, but Men will pretend Ignorance: So that the Suggestion of Matters (even the most manifest) must not be omitted, for Virtue does then more vigorously exert her self, when she is touch'd and provok'd. Some People there are that have not the Face to acknowledge an Error; (a most ridiculous and unmanly sort of Modesty!) Others have not the Heart to do it, but fret inwardly, and smother all in a stomachful Silence, falling foul like Bedlams, upon the Physician that would cure them: This mischievous Secresie and Reserve, proceeds undoubtedly from the Temptation of the Devil, who needs never despair of gaining his End, so long as he can keep himself close and undiscover'd. Our ulcerated Bodies, let them be never so offensive and loathsome, we can expose to the Chirurgeon or Physician, in hope of Remeedy, even without a blush: But what a stir we make, to hide the blemishes and infirmities of our Souls, as if to conceal them, were really to take them away; when yet we are not able to hinder them, even from betraying themselves. He that will not own himself to be wounded, shall never be cur'd.

V. Let a Physician tell us: *You have such a Disease, you are dangerously ill. Have a Care, you neither eat nor drink any thing to Day, but this or that:*

So

So far are we from taking this Liberty amiss, that, on the contrary, we reckon it for a Favour, and give him Thanks and Mony for his pains. But let any Man tell us, that we are sick of burning Lusts, vain Opinions, inordinate Affections, it puts us into a Rage, as if it were an Affront to be reveng'd with Fire and Sword. Never such a Dishonour! To tell me that I am Proud, Lustful, Covetous &c. An Indignity not to be born by Flesh and Blood! And where lyes the Injury now? Wretched Creatures that we are! Why may we not as well quarrel with a Glafs, that shews us an ill Face, as with a Friend, that shews us a vicious Mind? It should be our Busines to correct what is amiss, to amend our Lives, and cleanse our Hearts from all Corruption; and so to live, that the World shall not condemn us.

C H A P. III.

Of Purgation from Sin. The very Disposition to Sin, as well as the Sin it self, is to be rooted out. No Remedy more effectual against it, than the Consideration of Death and Eternity.

I. **S**IN is the Cause of all Evils, and he that commits it, is out of his way to his last End. It i the Seed of all our Miseries, and the Poison of Human Nature. The Malignity of it is better understood after the doing of it, than in the A&t it self. The binding of the Living together with the Dead, to destroy the one with the Stench of the other, is not much unlike the Punishment which Divine Justice has allotted to heinous Sin-

ners. They are ty'd up to the Plague, and there's no escaping. A bad Action is no sooner conceiv'd, than it brings forth its own Torment: So that he that will not endure something, that he may not do evil, must endure a great deal because he has done it. This it is, that brought Death into the World, and kindled Hell fire. We are therefore to cleanse our Consciences by Contrition, Confession, and Satisfaction: Neither are we to shun the more grievous Sins only, but even those too, which we esteem as the least and slightest, which tho' they do not hurry us immediately to Destruction, they do yet insensibly dissolve our strength, weaken us, and bring us to ruin in the end. And if the Vessel miscarry, what matters it, whether it be swallow'd up at once, or by taking in Water drop after drop, which being neglected, carries it to the bottom at last. The easier the Prevention, the more shameful is the Disaster; and the weaker the Adversary, the greater is the Dishonour of being overcome.

II. We must never expect to graft Virtue in the Mind, 'till we have given over hankering after even the smallest Vices. It signifies nothing, to have the Body in the Wilderness, and the Mind in Egypt. It is not enough to forgive Injuries, and to relinquish our more notorious and beastly Lusts, if we still take pleasure in lewd Communication, and the Vanities of this World. Ill Habits must be torn up by the Roots, that they may never shoot again: It is not the bare lopping of the Branches that will serve the turn. In some religious Fits, we are apt to say (yes, and perchance to think so too) that we are now absolutely resolved upon a new Life, and to quit the World with all the Corruptions and Vanities that attend

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it. Why do not we bolt the Door then against them, but only put it to? Oh how we are troubled to think of the Course we have led! And who is not? I beseech you. Is there any Man so wicked as not to disallow himself in his beloved Sins, even in the very Act of committing them? But what avails it to renounce them in Discourse, and yet to embrace them in Practice? No Man has a Conscience so fear'd, as not at some time or other to reflect upon his Wickedness with Detestation: But then they are soon Friends again; whereas, he that is truly converted, lays the Ax at the Root, and leaves not the least String behind him. He grows so jealous of his Frailty, and so suspicious of himself, that he starts at the least Occasion, at the very shadow of Evil.

III. Why do we so ridiculously cavil then, and urge the Frailty of Nature, in Plea against the Commands of the Almighty? Does not he that made us what we are, and gave us what we have, know best what we are able to do? Blind and impious Temerity! That Dust and Ashes should presume to Expostulate with the most High God! As if he imposed more upon us, than we are able to perform; and design'd rather our Misery than our Salvation. By this Perverseness, of pretending Difficulties where there are none, we provoke the Displeasure of the Lord against us; who hath enabled us to do much more than we imagine; as would appear, if we did put the strength he hath given us to the Experiment. Our Task is not hard in it self, but our Fears and Apprehensions make it seem so. How many Accidents and Encounters, that were terrible to us at first, hath Custom made familiar and easie! Wherefore, let us not undervalue our selves, God will not desert

his

his Soldiers, but give them (even for the asking) Ability sufficient for any warrantable Undertaking.

IV. The readiest way to master our Corruptions, is to propound to our selves, that every Day is to be our last; for there is nothing that so much engages our Affections to this World, as the want of Consideration, how soon we are to leave it. Can any Man be so forgetful, as to behold the daily Funerals that pass before his Eyes, without thinking of his End? And yet even among the dead themselves, we think of nothing less, than we do of Death. There is not any thing so frequently seen, and so soon forgotten. But the time is coming that shall deliver us from the beastly fellowship of the Flesh; dispel this cloud of Ignorance, and enlighten our Darkness. Let the oldest Man alive look back into the time past, and (if he can) pick but any one day out of his whole Life, that was not tainted with some blemish or defect. Our Childhood we have consumed in hobby-horses and bawbles; our Youth in levities and lusts; our Manhood in crimes of a deeper dye; and when we have put all together, from our Cradle, to our gray Hairs, there remains nothing to us but Anxiety of thought, and the sad fruit of our Iniquity. Alas! how miserable is that Man, that cannot look backward, but with Shame; nor forward without Terrour. Let him go to his Bags and his Coffers, that have cost him so much sweat and trouble: What Comfort will they speak to him in his extremity; or what will all his sensual Pleasures, his vain and empty Titles, Robes, Dignities and Crowns avail him in the day of his distress? What would a Man give when that dismal day comes, that he might begin the World again,

again, to lead a new life? but Wishes are then too late. We are to make use of time while we have it; and to forbear doing those things now, which we shall wish undone hereafter; *It is no great matter to deny our Appetites for a moment, that we may be happy for ever.*

V. If a Man upon his Death-bed were asked his Opinion of his past Life, and what he thought of Riches, Dignities, and worldly Delights; you should hear him tell you quite another Tale, than he did in his Health; for at that hour Men consider what they say, and speak what they think: Now although this Wisdom comes with the latest, for him that is upon his *exit*; it may yet be of great benefit to us, if we will but learn, from other Peoples miscarriages, to correct, or to prevent our own. Who but a Madman, when he may put to Sea in fair Weather, shall linger for a storm? or defer all care of himself, 'till the last extremity, when he may save all at present, without any hazard? Caution comes too late when a Man is under water, and so does Prudence too in the Grave. Those great and holy Men that have utterly renounced this World, and all that's in it, for the Love of a better, have made it the study of their whole Lives, to understand how to live, and how to die: And so hard a Lesson have they found it unto flesh and blood, that many of them, at their last breath, have not stuck to confess their Ignorance. But we (forsooth) account it time enough in all conscience, to betake our selves to that which is good, when, in truth, we are fit for nothing at all; and to begin our Lives, at an age, to which few People have prolonged theirs: A prodigious folly, certainly, for a Man to begin at the wrong end;

VI. Mon-

VI. Monstrous heedlessness! to believe all this, and yet to live on, as we do. What is Time, but the passing of a Shadow? Life, but a Point? or less, if possible. How small a distance is there betwixt the Cradle and the Tomb! Try if you can make the Sun stand still but one day, one hour, one moment. No, no, it will not be; Time is inexorable, and will hold on its course 'till it has brought all created Nature to destruction. And yet so besotted a Blindness possesses us, that we prefer this wretched Instant, before a glorious Eternity. In the case of our frail and perishable Bodies we lay out for necessaries, and provisions, and spare for no pains to procure them; but in that of our immortal Souls, we behave our selves as if they were none of our concern. Let the Body be out of order, and there is nothing so troublesome, but we can readily undergo to remove it; but in the distempers of the Soul, we are not only negligent but insensible. When was it ever said to us, *Save your selves by Sea, or you are lost,* and we protracted it? *Take off this Potion;* 'tis bitter, but 'tis wholesome, and we refus'd it? It is less than this, that God prescribes to us, for our eternal good, and we give no heed to it. If we happen to have a Law-Suit, what a bustle we make with our Sollicitors, and Breviates, feeing of Council, and tampering with Judges, to carry on the Cause? But in the great tryal of our Souls at the day of Judgment (which is at hand) and where Heaven or Hell is the question, there is no care taken; but we live on laughing and fooling, 'till we lose our selves beyond all Redemption, for want of Preparation. Let us therefore betake our selves to our wits, and put our affairs in order, as if we were every moment to be called to a reckoning,

This

This is true Philosophy, to separate Soul and Body by Wisdom, before they come to be parted by Necessity.

VII. The thing we are principally to intend, (whether busie or idle, in labour or at rest) is this; to deliver our selves out of the power of Time and Casualties, by the anticipation of Eternity; which places us in a state of Tranquility, that is steady and invariable. The Glutton in the Gospel is still begging the relief but of one drop of water to cool his Tongue, and condemned so; to beg it to perpetuity, without obtaining it. Eternity is an everlasting Instant, not to be thought upon, or mentioned, without horror; it is a restless Wheel, it is a continued, and endless, and a still commencing beginning: The serious thought of it is as Wormwood in our Cups of pleasure; it strikes us with astonishment and sadness; it tames our rebellious Spirits, and raises up the floathful Voluptuary to the love of Virtue; it facilitates all difficulties, sweetens all our afflictions, and makes our misfortunes seem not only short but easie. It is not in the power of Man to express or conceive this boundless Eternity. Were the whole Universe fill'd with numeral Figures, and as many Years (nay Ages) taken from Eternity, as there would be found Unites in the whole Sum, Eternity would be still the same, without any Diminution. He that considers the pains of Hell (as they are) to be ever beginning, and yet never at an end, must have a heart of Flint, not to trouble and repent at the thought of it.

C H A P. IV.

Of Gluttony, the Evils of it, and the Remedies: And to know when we have subdued it.

I. **T**HE first Vice we are properly to encounter, is Gluttony. This is the Sin that brought Death into the World, and ministers matter in a great measure to the rest. It was the eating of the Forbidden Fruit, that ruin'd the whole Race of Mankind, even before they had a Being: And it is still the weak side where the Devil lays his most dangerous Temptations. From hence proceeds dulness of Spirit, sloth, weariness of every thing, scurrility, babling, debauchery, heaviness of mind, and the dissolution of all Virtues, prodigality, beggary, a long train of Diseases, and Death it self in the conclusion: This is it that swells our Bills of Mortality; for vicious humours contracted from excess in Meats and Drinks, are the food of almost all Diseases. Other accidents may attempt and threaten us, but this cuts off.
Gluttony kills more than the Sword.

II. Oh the Infamy of being a Slave to a Man's Belly! a wretched Carkass, with an insatiable Appetite! Our bodies are one of the largest; and yet in greediness, the best and the most voracious of living Creatures come not near us. One Wood (we see) maintains a great many Elephants; and a Pasture of a few Acres, a great many Bulls: But for us, one World is hardly sufficient. The Air, the Seas, and the Forests must be all rifled, to please our Palates. He that looks into the Offices of a luxurious Palace, and sees the troops of

Ser-

Servants sweating and hurrying up and down; the massacre of Beasts, Flesh, and Fowl; and every thing afloat in the richest Wine; some to order the Plate, and cover the Table, others to serve up the Meat, so many to marshal the Dishes, others again to carve, and every Man ready at his part: He that sees, I say, the magnificence, and variety of these Entertainments, cannot but wonder at so horrible a profusion for the Guts of one Family. Not that I would advise any Man to starve himself; for the Belly is importunate, and must have daily food. But here lies the snare, we do the Busines of Pleasure, under the pretence of *Necessity*. If we would inform our selves how small a matter satisfies Hunger, let us consider what we are capable of, and what we have need of; we shall then understand, that no Man is driven upon excess, by necessity. *Nature contents her self with a little, but the cravings of Luxury are boundless.*

III. Hunger takes no pleasure at all in Completeness, or Ostentation; let it be satisfied, and no matter with what: So soon as the relish is off from the Palate, the precious and the common are both alike. Let him but eat, that is hungry, and drink, that is a-thirst; whether his Bread be white or brown, or his Drink plain Water out of the next Brook, or choicest Wine refresh'd with Snow, it is all one to Nature: Stay but the Stomach, and quench the thirst, she looks for no more. All the quarters of the World must be hunted for Fish and Flesh, several sorts of Wines for the *Gusto*, and provoking Sauces, to gratifie our phantaftical Appetites: And what are all these far-fetch'd Curiosities and Delicates in the end, but the Torments of a miserable Surfeit? *Epicurus recom-*

recommends Temperance to us, if it were for nothing else but the very pleasure of it. There's a great deal of difference, betwixt the plainest meat in the world to a good stomach, and the most delicious to one that is crop sick. He that would discharge himself of all superfluous care for the Belly, let him but consider the end of all, and that he is only preparing a Treat for the Worms: This methinks should make a Man so order his Body, as that his Mind may be never the worse for't. That's the best Diet undoubtedly, which is every where to be had, and without trouble, and neither burthen som to a Man's Purse, nor to his Body. He is a great Master of himself, that commands his Belly. The Body requires Nourishment, not Dainties; and we have been convinced of the superfluity of many things, by the want of them.

IV. But 'tis no such mighty business neither, to contemn Superfluities; give me the Man that can chearfully dispense even with Necessities, that can content himself with Bread and Water, and with the Herbs of the Field, as well for Man's meat, as for Beasts; that eats only to sustain and strengthen Nature, and to glorifie God; that takes his Meat as a sick Man does his Physick, meerly for healths sake, without any regard to the taste; that declines voluptuous Treats and Entertainments; and (at least) moderates himself in the pleasures of the Palate, since he cannot totally extinguish them; and preserves himself in purity both of Body and Spirit. The Perfection of Chastity is a better proof of Abstinence, than the bare taking down of the Body.

C H A P. V.

Of Luxury: The foulness of it: How apt we are to relapse into it: How to avoid it.

I. LUXURY is a brutal Vice; and that, which, of all others, puts a Man the most out of countenance. Nor is it so shameful only in the practice, but the Apostle forbids us the very naming of what concerns it. The foulness of it may appear in this; that a Man (if he has but the least spark of modesty or good-nature in him) cannot forbear blushing at the very thoughts of any Uncleanliness committed, if he does but imagine that any nody else knows of it. Nay, there are many People so tender and scrupulous in this point, that they'll run any hazard, rather than trust their very Confessors with so scandalous a secret. He that falls into this bog, very rarely gets out again; and there's little hope of him that's infected with this Disease; For, alas! what can Man do in the case of Continence, which is the Gift of God?

II. The first Remedy must be fervent Prayer to the Almighty, for Grace and Strength: And we are next, to resist the very first motions to Impurity, and to shake them off, as we would do a burning coal from our Garments. If we come but once to deliberate, we are lost. If we partly, we are upon the point of yielding. We must have a care of Idleness, High-feeding, lascivious Objects, loose and wanton Company. Nothing (in short) is to be omitted in this difficulty. Nay the very best of Men are not without their infirmities; certain latent dispositions, which though we cannot

cannot properly call sins, we find many times to prove the preludes to wickedness, and if they gain but never so little upon us, it will be hard quitting them. He that will be great, must not despise little things. *The least spark is enough to fire the largest City.*

III. Let every Man have a care of too much confidence in himself. He that goes on, without doubting, is fallen already. How many Instances have we of brave and eminent Men, that after solemn Confessions, Victories and Exploits, even to admiration, have yet been surprized, and lost at the sight of a Woman! I do not speak of *Sampson*, *David*, and *Solomon*, those ancient and famous examples of Human frailty, but others of fresher date, and which we see daily before our eyes. And if there were nothing else but a Man's own weakness, methinks he should be so conscious of it, as to be humbled, and suspect himself. What greater madness, than after so many experiments of the errors of all Ages and Nations, still to expose our selves to be worsted, in confidence of our strength! But this is the fate of our incredulous and stubborn Nature, to give no heed or credit to the falls of others, 'till we are in the Pit our selves. God made Woman for a Helper to Man, but by subtlety of the Serpent, she was wrought upon to be his Destroyer: She wounds, burns, and consumes him. There is no *Hyena*, no *Basilisk*, to what she carries in her Voice and Eyes: have a care of her Charms, as you love your Soul. *The whole Sex follows the old trade of driving Man out of Paradise.*

IV. It is an ordinary thing, I know, to excuse our selves, by saying *We cannot avoid it, she's of our Acquaintance, we mean no hurt in't.* But under these

these plausible pretences, there lies more mischief than we are aware of ; for we fall by degrees into dangerous Liberties, unwary Discourses, loose Behaviour, wanton Merriments, interchanging of Presents, &c. 'till in the end, by little and little, we come, from the neglect of Modesty, to just none at all. This Licence grows upon us by degrees, and he that blushes and trembles at the very appearance of a Woman to day, shall look Babies in her eyes to morrow ; play with her naked Breasts, and feel the Pois'on at his Heart, before he is sensible of the danger. Thus by degrees, from dim-fighted, our Reason comes to be stark blind, and the Divine Soul lies groveling upon the ground, without any consideration either of Heaven or of it self, 'till the fire of our Lusts shall be swallowed up in that of Hell it self ; the sad and miserable end of a beastly and momentary pleasure. As if we were all drunk with the Juice of that Herb which is said to make People *die laughing.*

V. Fools that we are ! what would we be at ? that have neither Wit enough to advise our selves, or to take counsel of others : Is it Pleasure we seek ? God hath provided Pleasures eternal for us in Heaven. Those of the World are deceitful, transitory and uncertain ; shall we lay hold of these then, and quit our Title to those of the next ? Where's our Reason ? What is become of our Understanding ? If we look upward toward those that are gone to Heaven before us, we shall find them such, as, here upon earth, mingled their bread with ashes, and their drink with their tears ; beset on every side with persecution and contempt ; holding no intelligence at all with worldly comforts ; and making prayers and tears their daily

daily exercise. Their way to Heaven lay through Torments and Crosses. But on the other hand, if we look downward into Hell, among the Troops of the damned, we shall there see (which they feel too late) the End and the Reward of trusting to the false Joys of this World, the Delights of the Flesh, and carnal Pleasures. We should do well to meditate upon this, if we believe it.

VI. But if Pleasure in this World be the thing we covet, why do we not then give it our selves in the blessing of a well composed and virtuous Mind? and that's a Pleasure substantial, sincere, unchangeable, and untainted: Whereas the enjoyments of the Flesh are weak, short-liv'd, only varnish'd over, bedawbed with Wine, and Perfumes, both afraid and ashamed of the Light: Lying most in Bawdy-houses, and Taverns, and such other places as commonly find work for the Constable. If they are glorious without, they are yet most wretchedly sordid within; they begin and end almost in the same moment, they perish even in the very enjoyment. But the Pleasure of the Mind is gentle, noble, invincible, steady and secure; and attended neither with Satiety, nor Repentance. It is neither accompanied with shame, nor followed with remorse or sadness; nor does it ever desert him that possesses it. The way to this Pleasure is to renounce all other; for *to consist in Pleasure is the greatest Pleasure.*

C H A P. VI.

Of Avarice: The Wickedness of it. The Poor and the Rich compared. The Deceit and the Vanity of Riches.

I. IT is the great cheat of Avarice, that it dis-
claims it self: For there is not any Man will
confess himself to be covetous. I have a Family
to provide for, says one: I would fain do some good
among my poor Neighbours, cries another: A third
is for building of Alms-houses and Hospitals. And
these are our Pretences for hoarding up Riches;
and when we have gotten them, we go on to
get more, and spend our Lives in a bare Acquisi-
tion of what was at first pretended for our Com-
fort or Support, but part with nothing. What is
a thirsty Man the better for the sight of a pleasant
Brook, or dabbling in it perchance with his Fin-
ger, unless he take some of it into his Stomach to
relieve his Drought? Just this is the Case of an a-
varicious Man with his Mony; he sees it, and
handles it, but his Mind is no Vessel to receive it,
and so never the better for it. God made the
Soul only for himself, and it is he alone that can
fill it.

II. Give the covetous Man the Treasure of the
whole Earth; let him not only possess, but tram-
ple upon all that is rich and precious, all that is
curious and costly in the Universe. Alas! the ha-
ving of all this will but serve him for an Incentive
to desire more. Nature is bounded, but Imagina-
tion is Infinite. It is not a Pin matter, what Mo-
ny in the Coffer, or what Corn in the Barn, to
him that is only intent upon what he has not,
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without computing what already he has. The World it self is too little for him, whom the whole World cannot satisfie. If we did but consider the Mischiefs that accompany great Fortunes, and the Benefits they deprive us of, we should soon find with the blessed Apostle, *that Covetousness is the root of all evil.* Thence come Frauds, Wars, Perjuries, Treason, Discord, Ambition, Robberies, Piracies, Publick Tumults, Domestick Treacheries, Corruptions in the Seat of Judgment.

III. Look but the poor and the rich Man in the Face, and compare their Countenances, and you shall see that the one, in the souneness of his Looks, betrays the anxiety and sollicitude of his Thoughts: The other's Brow is clear and open, in Testimony of an honest and chearful Mind. The rich Man's Happiness is but from the Teeth outward, a counterfeit Satisfaction, with a Worm in his Heart; when the poor Man, without any mixture of Trouble, enjoys a continual Repose. The one, betwixt the desire of getting, and the fear of losing, lyes expos'd to all the Assaults of Fortune; (*for the more he has, the more he covets.*) The other is rich even in his Poverty: His Wishes are squared to his Necessities; he fears nothing, for he hath nothing to lose that he cares for: He spends the Day merrily, and sleeps soundly at Night. Whereas the other, on the contrary, is never at ease; and the less sense he has of his Condition, the greater is his Danger.

IV. A Word now to the insatiable Miser, with all his Hoards, brave Houses and Possessions: The time will come, (the time appointed from Eternity) when he must part with all his splendid Acquisitions, Life and all; when all those things must perish too, for which he himself is likewise

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to perish. He will then see the Error of admiring what he should have despis'd, and of setting a value, so childishly, upon Trifles: Childishly I say, saving only that Children play the fool upon cheaper Terms. Their dotage is employ'd upon some pretty Shells, perchance, or Pebbles, that they find by the Sea-side; ours upon Gold and Precious Stones. I do not say, that where Providence hath given a Man a plentiful Fortune, the Owner of it should not make use of it: But I would have it honestly gotten; not by Fraud, Extortion, or Injustice, nor with more carking and caring than the thing is worth: We may take Money into our Coffers, but not into our Hearts, to the end that we may cheerfully resign our selves to the Will of God, either to want, or to abound. No Man so rich as he that needs not Riches. We are not to wait for the loss of all by Thieves, perhaps, or Casualties; but to strip our selves by Anticipation; which is done, if we do but take away from our selves, by an Indifference, whatsoever we might otherwise lose by Violence. *No Man is Master of himself so long as he is a Slave to any thing else.*

V. As to matter of State and Ceremony, we are to lay it utterly aside, and to conform in our Cloaths and Diet, not so much to Example, as to Christian Moderation and Virtue. Poverty it self, with good Husbandry, may be improved into Plenty. Let us but keep our selves from Thirst, Hunger and Cold, Nature asks no more. A Cottage may keep a Man as warm as a Palace, and there is no absolute necessity of covering our Bodies with Silk. Is there no quenching of our Thirst, but in Chrystral? No cutting of our Bread, unless the Knife has an Agat Handle? We may

wash as clean in an Ear then Vessel as in a Silver, and see as well by a Candle in a Pewter-socket, as in a Plate. He that values himself for his Gold, is inconsiderable without it: How much better were it for us, to set our Hearts upon those Riches, which neither Fortune nor Death it self can ever take from us? Why should any Man fear Poverty, that has the Treasure of a Kingdom within himself? There is the Kingdom of Heaven, in a good Conscience. He that seeks his own Good, let him seek God alone, who is the only Good, the only Possession, and the only Treasure. *The World is of no value to him that dedicates himself wholly to God.*

VI. Oh the emptiness and imposture, of all that we account delicate and glorious in this World! To see a Man wrapt up in Gold, and Embroidery, with a long Retinue at his Heels, and in a splendid Equipage; how wonderfully are we taken with the Spectacle? And yet, alas! all this is but a mere Pomp, and Ostentation of Vanities, that leave us in the very moment that they please us: And it is not from the Schools of the Philosophers, nor from the Cross of Christ, nor from the Eternal Wisdom alone, that I draw this Observation; but from the World it self, and those that have most courted and adored it. What Satisfaction had Haman in all his Wealth, Power and Dignity? No, no, says he (in a full Audience) *I reckon all this as nothing, so long as I see Mordecai sitting at the King's Gate.* What a Mockery, what a Blindness is this! I have often read and heard indeed, that the Pleasures of the Flesh and of this World are as nothing, compared with those of Virtue and Eternity; but to pronounce them to be as nothing, in respect even of nothing it self, this goes a great deal

deal farther: So that in effect, in the Contempt of nothing, we do nothing. But that we may not want Matter to work upon, let us contemn and repress our Lusts, that we may be better acquainted with Poverty, and learn to measure the true value of things by the use of them. Now *the way to bring our selves with ease to a Contempt of the World, is to think daily of leaving it.*

C H A P. VII.

Of Anger: The Character of an angry Man: The Effects, Causes, and Remedies of it.

I. **T**O be angry at Anger, is almost the only justifiable exercise of that Passion: For it is against a most execrable and outrageous Monster, an Affection so unquiet and turbulent, that if it once seizes us, it unmans us. It is, in one Word, a *short Madness*, that carries a Man head-long to Blood and Revenge, without any regard to Friends, good Manners, or indeed to his own Security; for, to take away another Man's Life, he'll run any hazard of his own, and (as in the fall of a House) dash himself to pieces upon the Ruins of what he carries down before him. Neither is it a brutal only, but a most ungraceful Passion. The Eyes burn and sparkle, the Veins fwell, the Hair stands on end, the Teeth grating, the Mouth all in a fome, the Voice shrill and piercing, the Countenance fierce and terrible, the Brow frowning, the Head joggling and nodding, and the whole Body in a continual and most uncomely Agitation: To say nothing of the menacing Actions and

Gestures, clutching and striking of the Hands, beating the Breast, stamping and tearing the Hair, rending the Cloaths, and all the Blood in the Body boiling in the Face. How abominable must this be in the Mind, that shews it self so detestable in the Countenance? The Poets draw the Furies with Firebrands and Snakes, howling and yelling, with hideous out-cries, which might serve for no ill Picture of a Man in Choler; if I may call him a Man, who by his bestial Cruelty, and savage Fierceness, seems to have cast off all the Advantages and Affections of Humanity. One may keep other Vices in private, but this breaks out at the Eyes, and discovers it self in the Air of the Face: Like Fire, it devours all before it, and the more we strive to suppress it, the more furiously it burns. *An angry Man is utterly uncapable either of Moderation or Reproof.*

II. As for other Vices, they are confin'd, we see, to certain Bounds and Limits; but Anger flies at all, and there is not any thing that scapes it, be it never so Sacred. Do we not invade Heaven it self, both with open Blasphemies, and secret Murmurings, against the Power, Goodness, and Providence of the Almighty? And our Anger extends it self not only to those that we think have done us an Injury, but to those too that possibly may hereafter do us one: So ingeniously we do improve our vain Imaginations, that we fall upon any Man that has the Power to disoblige us, as if he had done it already. Nay, we are many times in a Rage, we know not at whom, or for what, but yet bluster and fret; and for want of other Matter to work upon we fall upon our selves. Nor is it the Injury only that moves us; for we do frequently wreak our spight upon things inanimate,

mate, that cannot (properly) either disoblige or affront us. As, for a Man to cut his Cloak in pieces, throw Dishes and Candlesticks about the House, split Pens in a Rage, and tear Paper, because things will not go as he would have them: What can be more ridiculous? The breaking of a Glass is enough to put many a Man out of his Senses; the mislaying of a Napkin, the Screek of a Table drawn upon the Floor, and a thousand other things which do neither deserve our Anger, nor feel it. A resty Jade, a barking Cur, the buzzing of a Fly in our Ears, the stinging of a Gnat; these, torsooth, are Provocations to transport us beyond all Patience, and Death without Mercy, to the poor Animal that offends us. *How great a Madness is it, to punish Brutes and things insensible, for the Transgressions of reasonable Creatures!*

III. If we proceed now to take a view of Anger in the Effects, we shall find it the greatest Plague that ever infested Human Nature: How many Murthers, Towns laid waste, whole Nations utterly depopulated, heaps of slaughter'd Bodies (as if the Sword had vy'd with the Pestilence) and the Rivers running Blood. Look upon the Ruins of the noblest Cities of the World, unpeopled Desarts, Conflagrations, poison'd Fountains, extinguish'd Families: Consider all this, and you have here before your Eyes, the Fruits, and Works of Anger. I shou'd think, that we are no longer a Society of Men, but a multitude of Beasts, were it not that I find Beasts of the same Kind to agree among themselves, whereas Men are still worrying of one another. Now there is this further Mischief in Anger; it defaces the Image of God in us, whose Works are altogether peaceable and calm: It casts a Mist before our

Eyes, so that we are not able to discern the Truth our selves; and it makes us stubborn and uncounsellable towards others. It disturbs and distracts all the Faculties of the Soul, and let the Disease be never so foul, the Reputation it has gotten with the People, keeps it yet in Countenance; for with the Rabble, *Anger passes for the Mark of a Man of Honour.* But let us rather consider now, what Remedy in the Case; and if we cannot utterly take it away, how we may bring it at least, to some sort of Reason and Moderation.

IV. The best way will be to begin with the Contempt or Neglect of the first Motive to it; for if we once lose Ground, it will be hard recovering it: We are at the Mercy of That, and not That at Ours; when the Enemy is within the Gate, he'll hardly take Conditions of his Prisoner. It is a much easier matter to keep him out, than to govern him when he's entred. In the upper Regions of the Air, we find neither Clouds nor Tempests, but altogether serenity and quiet; the Thunder is below. So it is with a great and generous Mind; it stifles the very first Motions to Displeasure; it gives not way so much as to a licentious Word, but stands firm in a Station of Tranquility and Composure; very well understanding that by Transports of Anger, Evils are not remov'd, but made worse. It is with Cholerick Men, as with Birds that are lim'd, the more they flutter, the faster they are, and the more they struggle, the more entangled. The Anger does us more hurt than the Injury. He that is angry upon the Apprehension that another Man condemns him, does his Adversary too much Honour, if he values it; and thinks too meanly of himself, if he revenges

it. Revenge is a Confession of Trouble, and it is the part of a narrow Soul, to meditate a serious Revenge for an Imaginary Mischief.

V. In the Case of lying under a Slander, the question is not, What becomes another Man to say or do; but What we are to say or do our selves. Because another Man is waspish and perverse: Am I to break my Peace for't, and to be froward too my self? We are to imitate our Maker: How many impious Wretches does God suffer to enjoy the common Benefits of Nature? And yet among Mortals, one wicked Man will not be persuaded to endure another. Let us apply our selves to amend all at Home, which we may do; without concerning our selves so much for the Reforming of others, which we cannot do. Are we not Sinners? How little then is that we suffer, in comparison of the Hell which we have deserved? Are our Ears so delicate, that we cannot bear a Reproach? The Fault (and the Shame too) is his that does an Injury, not his that suffers it. The Sufferer is only to look upon his Affliction as a Portion allotted him from Eternity for his greater Good. *Forgive, and you shall be forgiven,* is the Word of God himself. He that awakens not at his Thunder, is not asleep but dead. *It is our interest to pardon others, as the Condition of being pardon'd our selves.*

VI. Among many Incentives to Anger, I reckon Suspicion to be the sliest and most insinuating of all. Let us away with it therefore upon any terms. *Good Lord (we cry) how coldly, how strangely such a one look'd upon me!* He would hardly take any notice of me. He gave me a word or two, and so went his way. Of this we may be certain, he that is jealous, shall never want Matter or Co-

lour for it; most People being apt to believe the worst. An ill Construction of things goes a great way in the very Injury we complain of: We are therefore to deal plainly, and judge charitably. And we are to say to our selves on the behalf of the absent: *Who knows but this may be all a Story?* In ill Reports it is not good to be over-credulous, and to take up a Pique at a venture, before we fully understand the Matter. Time and leisure will discourse all. In a Trial at Law, no Man is cast without a Proof, let the Cause be never so trivial: And shall we dare then to condemn a Friend without a Hearing? He must be a very weak Man, that presently believes all he hears. Some there are that spread false Reports with an Intention to deceive; others again, do but tell what they hear, and are deceived themselves.

What is spoken in private, is almost not spoken at all. What can be more unreasonable, than to suppress the Cause of our Displeasure, and yet publish the Effects of it? It is good sometimes to see and not see, and to hear and not hear. *He that seems not to know of an Injury, is not bound to take notice of it.*

VII. When I am told that any Body speaks ill of me, my Course shall be, to ask my own Conscience, if I did not speak ill of him first; and then to make it my own Case, *How many have I spoken ill of my self?* This Reflection will make a Man moderate; if not for the love of Virtue, yet for his own Sake at least. Shall I play the Epicure my self, and inveigh against Luxury in another? Put a Knight of the Post to declaim against Perjury? Be my self perfidious, and challenge exact Fidelity from my Neighbour? Why should not other People talk as freely of me,

as I do of them? I am to bethink my self, not only what I suffer, but what I do; and not to reprehend that in another, which I find in my own Breast. We are all bad enough, and to bear with one anothers Infirmities, is but common Equity. Nay, suppose that we are not as yet Guilty, who knows how soon we may be so? Let him that thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall.

VIII. The Wounds of an Enemy, the Offences of a Friend, the Disobedience of a Child, the Carelessness or the Treachery of a Servant, are things so familiar, that we may as well wonder at a Rose in the Spring, or an Apple in Autumn, as at any of them. A Man that walks the Streets of a populous City, must expect to meet with a slip in one place, a stop in another, the dash of the Kennel in a third: Just such are the Adventures of Life, and with the same Consideration they are to be undergone. When a lewd Person casts a Reproach upon a good Man, let them but both do their parts, and there's no hurt done. It is in the nature of the one to do Mischief, and it is the Duty of the other to requite Evil with Good. We are to try if we can mend him; which is never to be effected by Revenge, but rather by Patience and Obligations. It may perchance work a thorough Reformation upon him; but very probably, it will quiet and sweeten him at the least: Or however, we our selves shall most certainly be the better for it, if he be not. Well! There's such a one is my mortal Enemy, he has spoken the basest and the most dishonourable things of me.— How am I now to behave my self in this Case? Why truly, according to the Rules of Charity, and of good Discretion: *I have this but at second hand: I can hardly believe it.* Or, if he

did say it, some Body has abus'd him: I am confident he had no ill Meaning in it. Nay, it may be he said it on Purpose that I should hear on't again, and be the better for't. The truth on't is, he hath right on his side, for I cannot much deny the thing; and I'm e'en well enough serv'd for beginning with him. But after all this, what if it shall be found to be meer Malice, and a Design upon an innocent Person? Was not my Saviour more innocent, and incomparably a greater Sufferer? I am to say with the Prophet, *I was dumb, and opened not my mouth,* because it was thy doing. Let us all look to our own ways, and have a care, that what other People say or do amiss, prove not unto us an occasion of falling.

IX. But what is it that troubles us? Opinion? If so; it is but removing that Opinion, and we are secure; and this, methinks, might be done by a very ordinary way of Reason. Nothing can hurt us, unless we join with it to hurt our selves. The Mind is safe and inaccessible; out of the reach of Injuries and Accidents. It moves it self, and in judging of Externals, it makes every thing only to be as it is taken. *My Adversary* (says one) *is certainly the vilest Creature upon the face of the Earth.* Let him alone then, say I, and leave him to be punish'd by some other hand: Or however, he has his Torment already in his Transgression. *He's a Man of Reason, and I wonder he can allow himself in these Liberties.* I pr'ythee wonder at thy self too, and begin the Reformation at home, upon thy own Impatience, and learn to overcome Evil with Good. But we have other Mens faults in sight, and our own behind us. Oh the pleasure of Revenge, says the Vindictive Man. Let him take it then, say I; upon condition, that he fall

fall upon his greatest Enemy first. Let him begin with his extravagant Fury and Rage. Is not he a Mad-man that runs into the Streets to beat Boys for breaking his Windows, when he has Thieves in his House, that are ready to rifle him, and cut his Throat? When *Plato's* Hand was up in Choler, to strike an untoward Servant, he considered better of it, and check'd himself; *Sirrah*, says he, *I would box you, if I were not angry with you:* Judging it more for his Credit to chastise his Passion, before he meddled with his Man; and giving to understand, that a choleric Master deserves the Lash better than a negligent Servant. *You shall very rarely find any Man brave, that is furious.*

X. Judges and publick Magistrates may be allowed to put on a Countenance of Severity and Displeasure: but it at any time it comes up to Anger, let it be so order'd, as only to wait upon Reason, but not to preclude it. Offenders are to be reprobated, and corrected too, but without Passion. So long as there are bad Men in the World, there will be Villany in it; and he that is resolv'd to fret himself for whatsoe'er he sees amiss, shall never have any quiet Hour while he breathes. We are not angry at the Heats and Colds in their proper Course and Season: No less natural are the Indignities we suffer from wicked Men, and no otherwise ought we to concern our selves for them. A wife and a good Man should deal with Malefactors, as a Physician does with Mad-men; do them all the good he can, and let their Extravagancies go for nothing. The only Revenge for a Slanderer, is to let him alone, as if he were not worth a Revenge. The less his Calumny works upon another, the more it works upon himself, by disappointing him of the end and pleasure of his Contumely: But 'tis a shame, you'll

you'll say, for a Man to be contemn'd, and not to vindicate his Honour. How great a Shame is it then, to fear to be contemned? For no Man fears Contempt, but he that deserves it. A wise Man reckons nothing disgraceful but Sin; for he governs himself not according to the Judgment of Men but of God. If any Man despise me, if any Man hate me, let him look to it; it shall be my care not to deserve either. Patience is invincible, and triumphs in the end over Nature it self. It is a kind of Imitation of God himself, who forgives all, suffers all, and with his Mercies transcends our Iniquities. *It is more glorious to take no notice at all of an Injury, than to pardon it.*

C H A P. VIII.

Of Envy and Sloth, with their Description and Cure.

I. **T**H E envious Man is not only the first, but the greatest Plague to himself, he preys upon his own Bowels, before he meddles with his Neighbours Goods; and it is not in this, as in other Vices, where the Punishment follows the Sin, for here it goes before it, and yet keeps it Company too, for they go Hand in Hand together. A Diabolical Affection! That another Man's Happiness must be my Torment; and that which makes him fat, must make me lean. In other Sins, we find only an Opposition to this or that particular Virtue: But Envy perverts the very Nature of things, and professes open Enmity to all Goodness. First, to God himself, whose Nature it is (humanly speaking) to communicate all his Mercies and Blessings. Next, to the Saints and Angels,

Angels, who rejoice in the Comforts of their Companions, as if they were their own. Thirdly, to Christian Charity, which bids us do good even to our Enemies. And lastly, to the Law of Nature, which commands us to wish other People as happy as our selves. *Envy is a kind of blear'd Affection, it cannot endure to look against the Light.*

II. Satan indeed is envious, but it is against Men, not his Fellow Devils: Whereas in our Envy, (worse than the Devils themselves) we fall foul one upon another. A sign of a mean and abject Mind; for we envy nothing but what we think above us. He that would deliver himself from this Distemper, must take his Heart off from this transitory World, and fix it upon a better. *The love of Eternity is the death of Envy.* He that has set his Heart upon Heaven, can never envy any Man's Enjoyments upon Earth. It were as if a Prince should envy a Cobler. He reckons the World, and all the Glories of it, not worth a serious Thought. We have enough to do (a Man would think) to struggle with our own Afflictions, without vexing ourselves at the Prosperity of others. No Man shall ever be Happy, so long as the sight of a happier Man than himself can make him miserable. If by envying the Wealth, the Abilities, the Dignity of our Neighbours, we could transfer all to ourselves, it were something: But this is never to be done by Envy; by Love, in some measure, it may: For by loving what's good in another, we make it our own.

III. We may couple Envy and Sloth together; for they both agree in an abject heaviness of Mind. The Envious Man's Trouble is to see any body else happy; and the Slothful Man's, to despair of being so him-

himself: And none but pitiful Wretches are subject to either of these Passions. *Sloth is the Vice of languishing Spirit*, that's weary of every thing that good; and for fear of blocks and difficulties in the way, shrinks at the very thought of any generous Enterprize. *It will, and it will not*. The *Sluggard* is various and unconstant, a burthen to himself, a trouble to others: He's perpetually withing himself out of the World, weary of his Life, and the Contriver of his own Misfortunes. He's like a *Top*, in continual Agitation; the *Whip* drives him about, but 'tis only round, not forward. He stops still at half-way, and goes through with nothing. All his Works are insipid, and (like warm Water) a Vomit both to God and Man. This stupid Drowsiness must be shak'd off, and a generous Resolution taken up in the place of it, or we are undone for ever. *As the Bird is made to fly, so is Man born to labour*: And since Labour and Travel are our Portion, why should we not rather take pains to be happy, than to be miserable? Let us be never so lazy to Godward, the World will yet find us work enough to do. One Man labours for an Estate, another for a Title, or an Office; when half that trouble and diligence would secure us a blessed Eternity, and no body looks after it: But *Vices and Vanities come to a better Market*: The greater is our shame, to be so dull and careless in a matter of that Importance, as not to endure the Labour of one Moment, for an Eternal Reward. There is nothing so hard, but Courage, with God's Blessing, may overcome. We fancy Difficulties where there are none. Whatever the Mind imposes upon it self, it obtains. He that does what he can, does as much as he needs to do. *God helps the willing.*

C H A P. IX.

Of Pride, Ambition, and Vain-glory. The Description of a Proud Man. The Vanity of Dignities, and the Dangers. The Evils of High-Mindedness, and the Cure.

I. PRIDE, Ambition, and Vain-glory, are Vices that are very near a-kin: And they are to other sins, as the Sea is to the Rivers, the Source and Fountain of them all. When a Man comes once to be blown up with this Tumour of adoring himself, farewell all Reverence and Respect both to God and Man: And if there be no way to Glory, but by Villany and Fraud, by the Ruin or Death of his Brother; *That's the way he'll take without any difficulty or scruple.* The Proud Man is abominable to God, and intolerable to Mankind: All his faculties and studies are bent upon popular Applause. He takes wonderful Delight in the Contemplation of his own Abilities, and to think what pity 'tis, such Men as he are not employed at the Helm. He's as bold as blind Bazard; and puts his Oar into every Man's Boat, ever magnifying himself, and despising all others. And yet all this is done under a Mask of Humility, for fear he should be suspected of Ambition. If he miss his end, or fall into disgrace, the whole World is too little to hear his Story, and he makes it his business to stir up brawls and disputes. No Man so insolent and domineering to his Inferiors; nor so arrant a Slave to those that are above him. He'll fawn upon ye like a Spaniel, and you shall find him as tame as a Mutton. If there be any thing in him that's good, he has the Arrogance to challenge

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challenge it to himself, as if God Almighty had no hand in't. He loves to be in at every thing and to talk loud and magisterially of matters that he understands no more than a Goose. He is a great meddler in other People's Affairs; rash in his Judgment, and severe in his Censure. He's much better at spying out his Neighbour's Faults, than his Virtues. He has a kind of disdainful Singularity in his Port, Words, Looks, Actions, and Ways. He is not to be wrought upon either by Correction, Caution, or good Advice. He wants abundance of good things, which he fancies he has; and those which really he is possesst of, are nothing so great as he imagines them. And this it is that makes him gall and fret himself; as who should say, *Good Lord! What an Age are we fallen into, when Men of Parts are ready to beg their bread, and such as I am come to be neglected!* He is afflict-ed with a perpetual Palpitation of the heart; and it can hardly be otherwise with one that is continually upon the Tiptoe, and streining at (Honour) a thing which is out of his reach. *Pride is the Foundation of all Evil.*

II. If we will know the Difference between the smallest Particle of Eternal Bliss, and the whole sum of what appears to be desirable in this World (Kingdoms, Empire, nay the intire Universe it self) let us but lay them in the Scale, one against the other, and the Earth, with all the Pomps and Pleasures of it, are not so much as a Leaf, or a Feather in the Ballance. Let us look upward then, and address our selves to the end for which we were created, and laying aside all vain Opinions of our own Excellencies, let us examine our selves, and take a true estimate of our Worth and Value. He that is proud in a mean Condition,

Condition, certainly if he had been born to a Crown, there would have been no enduring him. Now I would have every Christian to prize himself, not as the Son of *Cæsar*, but (which is more) as the Son of God, redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. This is an Extraction that is truly honourable: Why do we not glorifie our selves upon this account, but rather lye groveling upon the Earth, to the scandal of our Divine Original? God is our Father, who hath elected us to the Dominion of the Heavens, and the Stars, and given us an Assurance of an everlasting Possession. Here lyes our Glory, our Nobility, our Comfort: Here we may lawfully boast. Let us therefore raise our Eyes and our Hearts, and frame our Lives and Manners to the Likeness of our Father which is in Heaven. This is the way that leads to true and to immortal Honour.

III. As for Crowns and Scepters, what are they but Golden Fetters, and glaring Miseries? which, if Men did but truly understand, there would be more Kingdoms than Kings to govern them. *A great Fortune is a great Slavery; and Thrones are but uneasy Seats;* and so they find them that posses them, let the Multitude conceive of them what they please. That Felicity cannot but be troublesom to the Ruler, that makes him burthenesom to his People. And when it comes to that once, how sick they grow of that Splendor, which charmed and dazled them before! What Contemplations and Philosophizing upon the Blessings of Privacy and Freedom, and the Vanity of Earthly things! They look then with Terror upon Death and the last Judgment; and all the Greatness that they have purchas'd with so much Sweat and Blood, shrinks to nothing at the very thought

thought. Let us therefore so live, that we may appear with Comfort before the Great Tribunal. *He that humbles himself now, shall be exalted hereafter.*

IV. He that thinks he shall be safe and quiet, when he is great, is directly out of his wits. Many Liberties may be taken in a private Condition, tha are dangerous in a Publick. The higher we are rais'd, the more eminent are our Infirmities; there's no concealing of any thing upon the top of the House, we have lost even the Tranquillity that we had before. There's not a day, not an hour, that we can call our own. And then the Fall is in a manner from Heaven to Hell. How can we then expect Peace and Repose in a Station, where all that ever went before us, have encounter'd Hazards, and Trouble, if not Death it self. How many Princes have been poysoned at their very Tables, betray'd in the Arms of their Mistresses? *Cæsar* was murther'd in the Senate-house. He that stands high upon a slippery place and the brink of a Precipice, *God have mercy upon him:* But the Man that stands below, upon the firm Ground, needs not fear falling. In our Greatnesses we are to consider, that every man that admires and flatters us, envies us too in his Heart. What with our open, and our secret Enemies, we are never secure. We are betray'd by our Servants, our Friends, our Relations. But these are the Sins and Miseries of Courts, not of Cottages. *He that lies close, lives quiet. He fears no body, of whom no body is afraid.*

V. A Man could hardly forbear laughing to see a Horse or a Dog, take upon himself an Authority over the rest of his kind: And is it not more ridiculous for a Man to do it, because he has more

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Mony perhaps, or more Power? Proud Dust and Ashes! to exalt himself upon his own bottom, when he has nothing good in him, but what he has receiv'd from above. We can call nothing our own, but our Sins. Let us render Glory then, for what we have received, unto him that gave it. Do we prefer one Horse before another because he has more Meat, or gayer Trappings? No, by no means; but we reckon him to be the better, that's the fleeter. No more is a Man to be esteemed for any thing apart from himself. But *I am a Person of Quality*, says one, *and the Best Man in the Company*. The very saying of such a thing, is a Forfeiture of the Honour he pretends to; for no Man is truly Honourable, but a good Man, with whom this Titular Honour is of no Account. True Nobility does not advance it self, and the great Ornament of an Illustrious Life is Modesty. *Humility goes a great way in the Character even of the most Glorious Prince.*

VI. If we would but take a measure of our little Bodies, and make a Search into our Infirmities, we should find much to humble us, and very little or nothing to brag of. The Philosophers tell us, that *the World is but a Point*; And yet we must be dividing even of this Point into Kingdoms and Dominions. The Earth we trample upon shall e'er long be laid upon us; and of all our Possession, we shall have only so much as will serve to cover a cold and rotten Carcase. And is not here a goodly Foundation, think ye, for all our great and mighty Projects? This Consideration, methinks, should put a Check to our furious and insolent Passions: There's no designing of Conquests, and ranging of Armies, in the Grave. When the mad Humour is over, we shall come then
(though

(though too late, I fear) to understand the Emptiness of Names and Titles; and that they are like Glass, the Brighter, the Britler; and the more they shine, the sooner they are broken. *The Oak that has been an Age a growing, is cut down in an Hour.*

VII. He that withdraws himself from Company, has cut off one dangerous Temptation: For Pride shews it self more or less, in proportion to the number of Spectators. People dress and trick up themselves to be seen. Are not all the excesses of Luxury, and Magnificence, for Ostentation? Did ever any Man expose the Pomp of his Vanity and Riot in a Desart? Ambition loves to shew it self in the Face of the World; and is never so well pleased as with a popular Applause. When the Bee has made her Honey; the Horse finished his Course; the Tree brought forth its Fruit, their Busines is at an End: But the Man that is struck with Vain-Glory, accounts all the rest as nothing, without making himself the Idol of the Multitude, and to be adored, flattered, and pointed at by the Rabble. But certainly did we but duly consider who they are that commend us, we should hardly think them worth our Courtship. They are a Vain and Fickle sort of Men, the dregs of Mankind, and made up of Phrensie and Contradiction. They are short-liv'd, both the Bestowers and Receivers of these Applauses. The Earth it self is but a Point, and this is done but in a Corner even of that Point. There were divers Dissenters too, and scarce a Man of all the rest that knows his own Mind. *But 'tis a brave thing for a Man to make himself famous to Posterity;* that is to say, to those whom we never did see, nor ever shall. Why are we not as well troubled, that no body talk'd

talk'd of us before we came into the World, as delighted to think how we shall be spoken of after we are gone out of it. Nay, let us give it for granted, that our Memories shall be perpetuated, and our Names live for ever. What then? what shall we be the better for this when we are dead? Or to come nearer, what are we the better for this same thing call'd Fame, even while we are living? A man is many times commended, where he is not, and tormented where he is. The value of every thing is in it self, and it self: And it is neither the better for a good word, nor the worse for wanting it. The Sun would be every jot as glorious without Spectators, as with them. The Rose is never the sweeter, nor the pleasanter; the Diamond is never the brighter for an Encomium. It is a strong proof of a Generous Mind, for a Man to be content with himself, and not to depend upon the Breath of the common People, for his Satisfaction. He that covets Praise does not deserve it; for what is there in us, that is Praise-worthy? Frail and miserable We ches that we are! (and at the best, but Unprofitable Servants). If there be any Man that has the Confidence to justify himself, and say he has done his duty; let him have a care that he be really what he would be thought to be; and that he approve himself in that which the World esteems him for. Our Being, Life and Reason we owe to Almighty God; and the only thing we can claim to our selves, is our Iniquity. *Nothing we are, and nothing we have to boast of; and till we acknowledge this, we shall never be any thing.*

C H A P. X.

Of the Government of the Body, and the Senses. How far the Body may be indulged. The Lust of the Eye, and Excess in Apparel, are Condemned.

I. IN the Entertainment of our Bodies, we are to take care that they be kept in Obedience to the Mind, on the one hand; and want nothing that is necessary for Health, on the other. We are to provide for them, but not wholly to serve them. Give me Meat to lay my Hunger; Drink to quench my Thirst; Cloaths to keep me Warm; and Lodging to shelter me from the Weather; I'll ask no more: Nay we are to suspect all Superfluities; for, *whatsoever is beyond a Competency is a Snare.* He that is over-follicitous for his Body, is the contrary for his Soul; and certainly we are born to nobier Ends, than to be Slaves to our Carcases; which we are no otherwise to consider, than as the Cages and Prisons of our Minds. A wise and a good Man does not so behave himself, as if his Body were the end of his Being; but he takes care of it, because he cannot live without it. The Body is the Instrument of the Soul; and 'tis not for a Workman to neglect his Trade, and spend his whole time in ordering his Tools. It is the Sign of a Sot, to be always tending of the Body.

II. Since it is by the Windows of the Senses that Death enters into the Soul, we are to draw them, as much as may be, from the earthly Life, to the Heavenly, and to keep them from being altogether taken up with Worldly Delights. (For we

we are to use them as Servants, not as Masters.) In the first place, we are to set a guard upon our Eyes. There is not any thing that more powerfully moves the Imagination, stirs the Appetite, or works upon the Mind, than a wandering Glance; and the Mischief is done in a moment. Wherefore let the inward Eye accompany the exterior, that we may see God in every thing we look upon; and when we shall have once learn'd to adore him in his Creatures, our next step will be, the Contemplation of His Divine Majesty, and to Worship him in Himself. *A delicate well drest Woman, is an Elaborate Luxury.* There's Death in her very Looks, and if you stand to gaze upon her, you're undone. Comedies, Balls, and Publick Spectacles do but weaken the Mind, and fill it with Toys, that take us off from the Consideration of better things. *One error in the Eye, begets another in the Affections.*

III. Hearing is the Sense of Discipline; the Gate by which the Notions of Truth and Wisdom are convey'd into the Mind. If the Passage of the Ear be not narrowly watch'd, we shall entertain Lies and Fables for Verities, and Folly for Wisdom. We must keep out all Slanderers, Tale-bearers, Newsmongers, Babblers, Busie-bodies, Idle Impertinents, and whatsoever else is beside our main business. As in Musick, a Man is not only affected upon the very instant of hearing it, but the Harmony leaves an Impression behind it, that works upon him when it is over; so in Conversation, a lewd Discourse, though it does us no hurt perchance at present, will be yet running in our heads afterward, and create in us evil Dispositions. The less we hear Men about our Ears, the more we shall hear God in our Hearts. As

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to Perfumes and precious Odours, they are an effeminate kind of Luxury. Let us sweeten our Manners; for it is more noble and manly to indulge our Souls, than our Nostrils. The Taste is to be humbled by Abstinence and Sobriety: The Touch, by Discipline, Mortifications, and Austerities. Is it not better to punish the Body, and preserve it, than so to flatter and indulge it, as to ruin both Body and Soul for ever?

IV. One may give a shrewd guess at the humour of a Man by his Cloaths: There is some regard therefore to be given to the decency of our Apparel and Dress. *A Fool is known by his Coat.* The ancient Sages among the Heathen would not suffer a Man so much as to hold up his finger, without giving a Reason for it. Now tho' I would not be so strict, I could wish yet, that Men would be a great deal more careful in many Cases than they are. I do not like profuse Laughter, Scurrility, loose Behaviour, Antick Motions and Gestures, a Huddling Gate, nor any thing whatsoever that may give Offence; as, foul Linnen, a greasie Doublet, an unpleasant Countenance, wagging the Head, or making Apes Faces, yawning and looking about, as if one were weary of the Company; nor (in Conclusion) any thing to make them weary of us. Many things may be well enough done, that are not fit to be seen.

V. Man was created naked, and he was not ashamed; for he knew no shame in it. But after his Transgression, came in his Shame; he lost his Innocence, that kept him in Countenance before, and made himself Breeches to cover his Nakedness. But that which was Originally a Mark of Guilt and Shame, is now become a Badge of Dignity and Honour. Our Garments now-a-days

are not so much for Covering, as for Ornament, and to entertain the Eyes and Curiosities of others. The Trimming and Dress is the Index of the Mind. It is a scandalous Effeminacy for a Man to spend his Time betwixt the Comb and the Glass. If he that's proud, or enamour'd of an Out-side, did but well consider what's under it, I am perswaded, it would take down his Stomach. He that has Virtue in his Mind, never troubles himself about Lace for his Back. Virtue is best in her native Beauty, without Arts or Fuccasses; and so glorious in her self, that if she were cover'd with Jewels, they would but serve her for a Foil. It is a miserable mistake in Men, to bestow so much Cost and Care upon the Body, and leave the Soul in all manner of Pollution and Uncleanliness. To see Men load themselves with Chains, and because they are of Gold, to glory in them too, without any Sense of Infamy or Contempt; as if the Metal made the difference. We are Princes in Golden Fetterers, and Slaves in Iron. Some are only shackled with Gold, others are rivetted and fastned to it. Their Ears are bor'd, where they carry a whole Patrimony in a Pendant; and that which was in old time a Punishment, is now become a piece of Vanity and Ambition. There is more pains taken about the ordering of a Peruke, than for the Security of the very Head it self. And so far has Folly prevail'd upon the World, that we set the highest Value upon those things that ought to be our Scorn. I would have my Cloaths plain and fit for my Condition; such, as I would be neither proud nor ashamed of; not for Ostentation, but Necessity. It is not Gold and Pearl that will keep any Man from being deformed, who is not cloathed with

Christ's Righteousness. This is the everlasting Beauty that shines in the Soul, when the Flesh is Worms-meat. Who but a Madman will be at the Charge to Gild a Dunhill?

C H A P. XI.

Of the Guard of the Tongue: How much it concerns us to Govern it, and the difficulty of so doing. Certain Directions what we are to observe in speaking; what to avoid. How to behave our selves in case of Calumny or Slander.

I. **T**HE Tongue has in a manner the Power of Life and Death; and it is of so great Moment, the Government of it, that we are to look very narrowly to it. A Tongue without a Guard upon it, is like a City without a Wall. There is no taming of it without the special Grace of God. Lions, Bulls, Bears, are a thousand times more easie to be reclaim'd. Men are naturally given to be talkative, and presently to communicate their Thoughts, as soon as they have conceived them: And then, being so near the Brain, the Fancy conveys it self down, and distils it self into Words immediately. It is not for nothing, that Nature her self thought fit to enclose the Tongue with the double Fence, both of the Teeth and Lips. Open the Mouth of a Glass, and the Spirits evaporate: Open the Mouth of a Man, and so does the Vigour of his Mind. He looks but ill to himself, that lets his Tongue run at random.

II. We

not be blurting out, without fear or wit, whatsoever comes at our Tongues end. Let a Man deliver himself candidly and clearly, without any Mystery or Disguise. God Almighty hath bestow'd the Faculty of Speech upon us, for the Testimony and Propagation of the Truth. He that gives Licence to his Tongue, when he is in a Passion, will speak that in a Moment, that he may repent all his Life after : Let him therefore examine himself, and forbear 'till the Storm is over. When a Man's Mind is at quiet, 'tis an easie Matter to keep his Tongue so too, for there is naturally a fair Correspondence between them. A sober and reasonable Discourse, is an Argument of a sound, temperate, and well-composed frame of Mind. And on the other side, the one blasts the other. *The Value of a Man is best known by his Discourse.*

III. Better not speak at all, than to no Purpose. We can make Choice of our Meats, why not of our Words too? We can examine what goes into our Mouths, and why not what comes out of them as well? For the latter is more dangerous in a Family, than the other in the Stomach. He that converses much with himself, and little with other People, is the wisest and the happiest Man; for more have repented themselves of their speaking, than of their silence. Nay, even of Animals, the most apprehensive among them are the least clamorous. Women and Children are the most given to Babbling. Many vain and unprofitable Words are the certain Indication of a weak and a worthless Man. If we love God, and study'd our own Salvation as we ought, our Discourse will be altogether of Him, of Virtue and Perfection. Love can neither dissemble nor conceal it self,

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and where we truly love, we can talk of nothing else. We are not willing to treat of heavenly things, because our Affections are not yet taken off from the Corruptions of the Flesh. And then for want of Reading and Meditation, we are at a loss even for matter, if we had never so good a Will to the Discourse. *Out of the abundance of the Heart, the Mouth speaketh.*

IV. When Company meets, the better half of the Conversation is commonly spent in talking of other Peoples Affairs: Where every Man has almost as many Judges to sit over him, as there be Heads in the Town: But not a Creature that looks homeward. We are all of us as blind on that side, as we are sharp-sighted on the other. In Cases of Reproof and Scandal, our Ears are open to every idle Story; but let any thing be spoken to the Honour and Vindication of our Neighbour, we take no notice of it at all. Detraction is a common Fault, and the commoner (like an infectious Disease) the more dangerous. But what have we to do with other Peoples Faults, when every Man has work enough at home, to mend one? Have a care of blabbing Secrets on any terms: Or of committing Secrets rashly to any Body; for it has been many a Man's ruin. And whether a Man be betray'd by one, or by more, it is the same thing. For a word passes from one to another, 'till it comes to all at last. This facility is commonly found among People that are full of Discourse, and that love to hear themselves talk: They are possest with a kind of Drunkenness, and when their Tongues are once going, they can hold nothing, be it never so private and sacred. They interchange their Secrets by turns; first the one, and then the other requites him as a

Seal

Seal of the Confidence. If the one keeps Counsel, the other tells all perchance to the next Man he meets, 'till every Body comes to know that, *under the Rose*, which no Body seems to know openly. But in the Conclusion, it goes so long in a Whisper, 'till at length the Secret overflows, and becomes a publick Rumour. There is scarce any evil under the Sun which the Tongue has not had a share in: We should therefore weigh our Words, and bridle our Mouths, for fear of bolting somewhat that had been better let alone. It is much more commendable to be sparing of our Words, than of our Money. He that squanders away his Estate, tho' he does himself hurt, yet others are the better for him; but the Profusion of the Tongue, every Body is the worse for it. *To hear much and speak little is a Divine Virtue.*

V. There is not any thing that escapes the Lash of a licentious Tongue. No, not the Princes of the Earth with all their Power. Not the holy Saints and Martyrs, with all their Sanctity and Innocence. Nay, our Blessed Saviour himself, when he was upon Earth, suffer'd under contumely and reproach. So that we are not without great Examples, to encourage and excite our Patience. He that behaves himself as he ought to do, under the Persecution of ill Tongues, may reap an advantage from them; for *Detraction is a kind of Provocation to Virtue*, and as good as a Bridle, to keep a Man in the right way; and tho' it be a great wickedness it self, in him that uses it, there is not yet (in Consequence) a greater Enemy to Wick-edness in another. When any Body speaks ill of us, we are to make use of it as a Caution, without troubling our selves at the Calumny. He that would disappoint the Malice of a venomous

Tongue, let him slight it; let him but hold his Peace, and it does him no hurt. If my Conscience tells me that I am Innocent; what do I care who tells the World that I am guilty? He's in fine Case, that values himself upon other Peoples Opinions, and depends upon the Judgment of Fools, for the Peace of his Life. When any Man is ill spoken of, let him consider; if I have not deserved it, I am never the worse; if I have, I'll mend. If a Jewel be right, no matter who says 'tis a Counterfeit. It is not the decrying and discrediting of a Crystal Brook, that will turn it into a Puddle: Nay, if you throw Dirt into it, you shall see it clear again presently. Let us learn Virtue then from the very Fountains and Rivers, and maintain Tranquility of Mind, in despight of Censure and Opposition. It is a womanish Weakness and Levity, to be startled at every Report. To see a Child in the Mothers Arms tearing of her Hair, striking her, pinching her Breasts, clawing and slavering of her Face; there is not any Body that will take this for an Affront, because the poor Creature cannot intend it so, and knows not what he does. No more ought we to be moved in the Case of a Calumny, than Parents are at this behaviour of an Infant. He that lets himself down to be wrought upon by an Injury, does too much honour to his Adversary: For where it vexes me to be despised, it would wonderfully please me to be esteem'd. This is the Humour of a narrow Mind; And no Man shall ever be happy, whom Contempt can make miserable.

C H A P. XII.

Of the Internal Senses. The use of Opinions. The Mind is to be tinctured with good Thoughts. Of Bridling the Sensitive Appetite, and depraved Affections: Divers Precepts to that end.

I. **I**T is a main point of Wisdom, not to admit **I** of any Opinion into the Mind, which is not consonant to Nature or Reason: Wherefore we are to set our selves against all the inordinate Motions of Fancy, as the Logicians do against the Quirks and Fallacies of Sophistry. *My Son's dead:* I am not to blame for't; I could not help it. *My Father has disinherited me:* And that's the same Case with the other. Well; *There's something I take very ill:* Now this is not well done, for 'tis my own Act, and a thing in my own Power to prevent. *Such a Man bears his Misfortunes with great Honour:* He does well in't; for it was in his own Power, and the thing it self is good. *My Friend is carried away to Prison:* That's no great matter. Oh but he has very hard Measure (you'll say:) Correct Opinion, and there's no hurt in that neither. We should deal with Imagination, as we do with a Madman, keep it in Chains for fear of Mischief. For otherwise a wild Beast is not so ungovernable. It flies out, rambles, extravagates, hunts after Novelties, takes no rest, and knows no such thing as Moderation. We are to restrain, and fix it, if we can; for otherwise, instead of a clear and constant Reason, all our Thoughts and Resolutions are to be steered only

by Uncertainty and Opinion. *Whatsoever falls not within the Compass of the Mind, is beside our business.*

II. Whensoever anything presents it self to our Thoughts, we are thoroughly to examine the Matter within our selves. First, as to the Nature of the thing, simply and in it self, abstracted from all things else. And then, as to the Properties, the End, Circumstances, Benefits: How far it may concern us; whether it be in our power, or no: Without which we are to give it no admittance; but on the contrary, as much as possible to oppose it. Let every Man remember, that there is a Searcher of Hearts, and take heed of exposing to Almighty God those Corruptions in his Soul, which he would blush to own to a familiar Friend in an honest Conversation. Let our Thoughts be peaceful, sincere, pure, and void of Malice: Such (in fine) as if any Man should ask us (on the sudden) what they are, we need not scruple to own them. We are not so much as to think what we are ashamed to speak. *The best way to keep out wicked Thoughts, is to be always employ'd upon good ones.*

III. The greatest Opposite and Enemy to the Reasonable Soul, is the Brutal and Sensitive Appetite: The Fountain of all Sins and Imperfections, the Adversary that we are always to fear and struggle with, 'till we have brought him (as far as may be in this Life) under the Government of Reason. This is a Combat that admits neither Quiet nor Truce. We have a restless Enemy to deal withal, and it must be a restless Conflict. An Enemy that lurks in our Veins; nay, the one half of us is in a Conspiracy against the other. We are to rescue our Souls from our Bodies, and to assault our selves: He that subdues his Passions, does a greater

greater thing than he that conquers a City. I do not ask an Impossibility, and that we should utterly extinguish our depraved Affections; let us only learn to govern them: I am not for a Stoical Apathy, but for a Reasonable and a Christian Moderation. Nature was never guilty of any thing that is vain and superfluous. Take away all Affections, and you take away all Virtue. *Where there is no Combat, there can be no Victory.*

IV. This Dispute, I must confess, is both difficult and doubtful: For our Passions are a great deal older than our Reason. They came into the World with us, but our Reason follows a long time after: And when our Affections have a good while domineer'd and carry'd our Wills (blindfold, as it were) into all sorts of specious Mistakes, under the colour of Good; then up steps Reason (in process of time, and fortified by Experience) to claim her Right of Authority and Jurisdiction, and to put a check to the Tyranny of our Brutal Appetites. As to the first Motions of Nature, there's no preventing, no avoiding of them; but then it concerns us to keep a strict watch over them, that they do not grow upon us; and if we find them unruly or impetuous, to subject them to the Government of Reason. We may better struggle with Beginnings than with Habits. If we be but circumspect, we may easily keep our selves quiet: For he that forecasts what may happen, shall never be surpriz'd. 'Tis too late to begin to Arm, when the Enemy is in our Quarters. In the multiplicity of our Words and Actions, how much is there that might be spar'd! Let us therefore contract our selves; the less we have to do with the World, the less will be our Trouble. And it is not for us to say, *This or that is a small Business;*

ness; for I tell ye, let it seem never so small, It is a great Advance, the very first Step that leads to Virtue and Perfection.

V. If we may compare to a Tree, the Old Man in us, that derives his Original from the infected Seed of *Adam*; we may resemble Self-love to the Root, a Perverse Inclination to the Trunk, Perturbations to the Branches, Vicious Habits to the Leaves, Evil Works, Words, and Thoughts, to the Fruit. Now the way to hinder all subsequent Corruptions and Wickedness, is to lay the Ax to the Root, and to begin with Self-love. Take away that, and the whole Off-spring of Carnal Appetite is destroyed at one blow. And this is done by Humility, and Contempt of our selves. We must be lowly in our own Eyes, and not fear either the Scorn or the Displeasure of Men: We must chearfully submit to what Condition soever God hath appointed for us: *He that hates himself as he ought, shall be sav'd; He that loves himself as he ought not, is in danger to perish.*

CHAP. XIII.

Of Love, the Nature of it, Causes, and Effects. Its Remedies; and somewhat added of Hatred.

I. **L**OVE is a certain Delight or Satisfaction we take in that which is Good: The first Impression that affects the Appetite, proceeding from the pleasure we take in a known Good. It is the Cement of the World; the most powerful of all our Passions; subdue this once, and the rest are easily overcome. The Love which is Divine, aspires

aspires naturally towards its Original. All good comes from the Sovereign Good, and thither it tends. Let every Man call his own Soul to a Shrift, and see what it is that his Heart is most set upon: For it is either the God which he should worship, or the Idol which he should not. It is the Command of God, *that we love him with the whole heart*, and without a Rival. *He that loves any thing else, with his whole heart, makes that his God.*

II. Beside the ordinary Motives to Love, which are Virtue and Beauty, there is also a certain Agreement and Congruity of Minds and Manners; together with several Graces and Advantages both of Body and Mind: As, Modesty of Behaviour, Industry, Nobility, Learning, Sharpness of Wit, &c. But *the great Attractive of Love, is Love it self*; which if accompany'd with Benefits, is sufficient to turn even the strongest Aversion into a Kindness. Men of clear Spirits, warm and sanguine Constitutions, mild and gentle Natures, are much given to Love.

III. So great is the Power of Love, that it does in a manner transform the Lover into the thing belov'd. It is a kind of a willing Death, a voluntary Separation of the Soul and Body. He that is in Love, is out of himself; he thinks not of himself, he provides nothing for himself, and effectually, he is as good as no where at all, if he be not with the thing he loves: His Mind is in one place, and his Body in another. How miserable is that Man that loves, and loves not God! What Proportion is there betwixt a corruptible Object and the Immortal Soul! The end of such Love is Vanity, and Vexation, and Disappointment: Whereas he that loves God, lives always where

where he loves; in him, in whom all things live; and in a secure possession of an unchangeable Good. In Carnal Love there is a mixture of Bitterness and Violence; but the Love of God is altogether humble and calm. The one is full of Jealousies, the other has none. Here we are afraid of Rivals, and there we pray for them. We are to love God, if we love our selves; for we are only the better for it, not he. *Man is Changeable and Mortal, but there's no losing of God, unless we forsake him.*

IV. If we would have the Love we bear to our Neighbour sincere, it must be wholly founded upon Piety and Religion; abstracted from all the common Considerations of Wit, Likeness, good Humour, &c. The Platonic Love, which pretends from the sight of a Corporal Beauty, to raise the Soul to the Contemplation of the Divine, proves in the end to be the very Bane of Virtue. It is very rarely that a Man stops at the view of a lovely Woman, without a desire to come nearer; and whether it be a Ray only, or some kind of Fascination with it, that passes from the Eye to the Object; somewhat there is that dissolves a Man, and ruins him. There's more danger in a Slip of the Eyes, than of the Feet. The Cure of Love is the more difficult, because the more we oppose it, the stronger Resistance it makes: And if it be not checkt at the very beginning, it comes so insensibly upon us, that we are in before we are aware; but if we begin with it betimes, the Remedy is not difficult. One way of Cure may be by Diversion, and plunging a Man's self into business, to put the thought of it out of his head: But then we must avoid all Occasions and Circumstances, that may mind us of the Person we love.

love. For if we relapse, there will be no remedy, but Time and Absence; we must expect to be perpetually seized with it, 'till in the end it's weary'd out and falls asleep. Many have been cured, out of meer Shame to see themselves pointed at, and made a Town-talk; and then, perhaps, they may have been brought to a better understanding of the Dishonour and Hazard of their Proceeding. Others have relieved themselves by finding out of Faults and Inconveniences, and by enquiring into the Errors and Imperfections of the thing they love. But the last and surest Remedy, is to drive out a Carnal Love with a Spiritual; and to turn our Affections to God, to Virtue, to Heaven, and to Eternity, which are truly amiable. A generous mind cannot but be ashamed to set his heart upon a Dunghil. *Evil Love corrupts good Manners.*

V. What is it but a kind of Natural Love-Chain; that ties the whole World together, and the several parts of it? The Stars of the Firmament in their Motions, the Birds of the Air, and the Beasts of the Field. Now this sacred Bond is only dissolv'd by Hatred, which leads to Division and Dissention, as Love does to Union. The most subject to this Vice are the Slothful, the Fearful, and the Suspicious; for they fancy themselves to be threatned with Mischief, which way soever they look. There are some People of so unsociable a Nature, that like Birds of ill Omen, they both hate and fear all things together. These Men are a burthen to themselves, and to be avoided by all means, but with Pity, not Hatred. And in truth, there will be no place for Hatred, if we turn every thing to the best; for there is no Man so ill, but he has some mixture of Good in him. There
is

is nothing truly detestable, but Sin and Damnation. If we turn our Hatred any other way, the harm is to our selves, and not to the thing we hate. For if we are commanded to love our Enemies, we are likewise implicitly commanded not to hate any Body. The wickedness, I confess (but not the Man) we may and ought to hate, and it is there only that we can justifie our hatred. But if a Man we must needs hate, let us begin at home, for there it is (even in himself) that every Man may find his greatest Enemy.

C H A P. XIV.

Of Desire and Aversion. What is to be desired, and what to be declined.

I. **H**E that submits himself to God, that desires nothing but with Resignation, accommodates himself to his Condition; that says, *Whether I be Sick or Well, Rich or Poor, Here or elsewhere; Be it as it pleases God, his Will be done.* This is a happy Man. But when we come once to expostulate and say, *When shall I go thither? When shall I have this or that?* we are in the ready way to be miserable. For he that covets what's out of his reach, is condemned to a Wheel, ever pursuing what he shall never catch. Opinions, Thoughts, Affections, and some Actions too, are in our own power; but our Bodies, Riches, Honour, Preferences are not so. No Man will pretend to forbid or hinder the former; but the latter are liable to impediments, and hinder the Jurisdiction of another: So that we are either not to desire them at all, or otherwise, to take them only during Plea-

Pleasure, and as Transitory Benefits which cannot long continue with us. There is nothing in this World desirable, for *the Figure of it passes away*. Nay, if we had our very Wish, Death will come, and then we must leave all behind us. But within us is an inexhaustible Fountain of Comfort, if we will but take the pains to dress it, and keep it open.

II. It was the great business and wisdom of some of the Ancient Philosophers, the Government of the Passions; and upon the Consideration of the Powers granted by God unto Man, they came to this Conclusion, that there was *nothing properly to be accounted our own, but our Thoughts and Affections*: And by frequent Meditation upon this matter, they got so absolute a Dominion over the motions of the Mind, that by virtue of that Command, they did not stick to pronounce themselves (and with some Reason too) the only Rich, Powerful and Happy Men alive: Insomuch, that having exempted themselves from the Empire of Fortune, while their Bodies were even agonising in the Extremity of Torment, their blessed Souls were yet calmly exercised upon the Contemplation of Beatitude. But it was by daily Labour and Practice, that they brought themselves to this state of Indifference for external things: And he that has gain'd this point, does no more trouble himself for the want of any thing which he has not, than because he is not Emperor of Tartary, or has not Wings to fly. *Those things that are without us, do not concern us.*

III. This may serve to put a check to our Appetites; which, if they be not kept within Bounds, will run out into endless Extravagancies; and the more we grant them, the more they will crave.

What

What does it signifie to pour Water down the Throat of a Man in a Fever? when his Grief is not a Thirst, but a Disease. He that squares his Desires to his Reason, is upon some certainty, but when they lash out into Vice and Luxury, there is no end of their Importunity. He that contents himself within the Limits of Nature, shall not need to want any thing he would have; but he that exceeds those limits, shall be a Beggar even in the greatest abundance. *A very little suffices Nature, but Appetite is insatiable.*

IV. We should do in our Lives, as we do at a Banquet; when any thing is brought about and presented us, we are modestly to take part: If it passe by us, to let it go; if it be not yet come to us, to wait with Civility and Patience, 'till it does come. The like Affections ought we to have for Riches, Honours, and other external things; at least, if we will pretend to the enjoyment of such a Serenity of Mind, as no Accidents shall be able to discompose. We are arrived at a blessed state of Tranquility, if we can but advance thus far: But if we bring our selves once to a Neglect and Refusal of whatsoever the World can pretend to offer us, our work is done, and we are effectually (even upon Earth) in Heaven already. Every Man's happiness is in his own Power, if he will but keep his Desires within Compass. He is the happy Man that can have what he will, and that may every Man, by confining his Desires to what he can have.

V. There are many things we dread and abominate, as the greatest Miseries and Misfortunes that can befall us, which in the end prove the very contrary. They are troublesom, it may be, and go against the Hair, but they are instructive,

Death

Death, Banishment, Want, Disgrace, Labour, Sickness, and the like; they are neither Evils in themselves, nor in our Power, nor are they properly our Concern. They are terrible only in Opinion, and not worthy of our Aversion. *Socrates* (aptly enough) calls them Bug-bears; only Vizours to fright Children, and the whole busines is but a Masquerade. Death it self, is it any more than a Bug-bear? How has it been courted (even in the most hideous forms) by Multitudes of the blessed Saints and Martyrs! Nay by Pagans as well as Christians; by *Socrates*, and divers others of the Heathen Philosophers! There is not any thing in it so formidable, but only Conceit and Opinion. It is the fear of Death, and not the Death it self, that is so dreadful; and so it fares too in many other Cases. Let us turn all our Fear, and all our Hatred, to the Fear and Hatred of Sin.

C H A P. XV.

Of Joy and Sadness. How a good Man ought to rejoice. He that looks before him is not cast down. Several Antidotes against Sorrow.

I. JOY, when it passes the bounds of Modesty, draws on a kind of Dissolution of the Mind. We must have a care of that, and so to moderate our Chearfulness, that if need be, without any Difficulty, we may dispose our selves from Mirth to Sadness. Our Saviour (who was the best Judge of things) says not, *Blessed are they that laugh,* but, *they that mourn.* It were a strange indecency for a Christian, that professes himself a Follower
of

of Eternity, among so many Perils both of Soul and Body, so many just grounds of Sadness, to spend his Life in Gigling, and making Fools Faces, and transporting himself for Trifles. That fugitive earthly Pleasure, and the Joys we talk of, are very many times the nearer Forerunners of Sadness. *There is no true Joy, but that of a good Conscience.* He that cherishes, and takes care of the one, shall never want the other; for it grows in his own Breast. All other rejoicing is but Merriment and Frolick, without any Substance at all, and many a Man laughs with a heavy Heart. *True Joy is a serious matter;* and there must be a good Conscience, honest Purposes and Actions; a Contempt of Pleasure, and the peaceful Tenor of an unspotted Life, to maintain it. There can be no perfect Joy without Justice, Courage and Temperance. This is the method of Virtue, first to mourn, and then to rejoice.

II. *Sadness is a Perturbation of the Mind, by reason of some present Evil, either real or apprehend'd:* But we do oftentimes find more trouble in the Opinion of things, than in the things themselves. Wherefore be not too inquisitive into the Qualities of things; as concerning Servants, (for the purpose) Lands, Monies, Busines; but rather take into consideration the Opinion and Estimate we have of them. It is not in a Man's Power to prevent Disgrace, Robbery, Violence; but to make a right Judgment of these things, and to satisfie himself that they are not simply evil, but often profitable; this is in his Power. He that suffers under a present trouble, let him but turn his thought to a good Conscience, which is a continual Comfort, and there's his Cure. Nothing can fall amiss to a Good Man: Not that he does not feel it, but he masters

masters it, and considers all Adversity, only as matter for his Patience to work upon, as the Instrument of Divine Grace, and that which opens him a way to Eternal Glory. *A good Man may be reputed unhappy, but he can never be so.*

III. It does very much abate the edge of a Misfortune, to foresee it; and to say to our selves, *Whatsoever may be, shall be; for he that is prepar'd, can never be surpriz'd.* Disappointments fall heavy upon People that are agog upon Prosperity. What if a Man should lose half his Estate? What if all? What if his House should fall? His Corn be all blasted? his Friends forsake him? What if his Credit should be endanger'd? His Office taken away? His Gown turn'd over his Ears? And to all this, let us add Sickness, Bondage, Ruin, Fire; it comes to no more than what every wise Man is prepar'd for. There is no Calamity, which he has not thought upon before-hand, and made as easie to him by long Meditation, as others make it by long Sufferance. That which happens to any Man, may be every Man's case. Where's the Rich Man that can secure himself from Hunger and Beggery? Where's the great Man that may not fall into Disgrace and Contempt? Where's the Kingdom or Nation that may not be overturned and utterly unpeopled? *Have not we our selves liv'd to see the Head of a Great and Glorious Prince under the Hand of the Common Hang man, and struck off by the command of his own Subjects?* A most execrable Villany, and beyond all Precedent! And these prodigious Changes are not the work of much time neither; there's but a moment betwixt Plenty and Beggery; the Court, and the Cottage; a Throne, and a Scaffold. This is the mutable Condition of Human Affairs. What was another

Man's

Man's Lot to day, may be mine to morrow. No Man bears ill Fortune, better than he that always expects it.

IV. In Prosperity, Virtue has little or no occasion of shewing her self; but in the time of Adversity, her Power is manifested in our Patience. *We are become a Spectacle* (faith the Apostle) *to God, Angels, and Men.* And it is a Spectacle in which God takes delight, to see a brave Man grappling with ill Fortune, and leading all his Enemies, Foreign and Domestick (Passions and Casualties) in Triumph. 'Tis nothing to govern a Ship in a smooth Sea, and a gentle Gale. He that is not try'd, lives in Ignorance. *Most unfortunate Men,* (we cry) *that ever it should come to this!* (But on the other side,) *Most fortunate Men* (say I) *that have had the benefit of this Experiment!* that we have supported our selves with Honour and Constancy, where others perchance would have shrunk under the Burthen. We are not therefore to yield and render up our selves in Crosses and Disasters; but to make good our Ground, and stand firm upon any Accident that can befall us: For 'tis but breaking of the first Shock, and we shall find the rest to be only Fancy and Opinion. The Works of Nature are found in us alike; but for Poverty, Discredit, Contumely, and what else the common People call evils; some there are that bear them with Patience, and others without so much as taking the least notice of them: So that it is not the force of any Natural Impression that we labour under, but the Influence of a perverse Opinion. Why should a Man belie himself then, and call any Calamity insupportable, which he may make easie when he pleases, only by changing his Opinion of it? Every Man is just

as unhappy as he thinks himself, and let him complain of what he will, his *Impatience is the greater mischief of the two.*

V. Is there any Sickness, or any Pain so obstinate and stubborn, but Time will either abate it, or take it away? Now the Question is, whether we shall put an end to it our selves, or stay 'till it comes to an end without us? For time will most certainly do that at last, which ordinary Prudence might better do at present. Nay, if we had never so great a mind to entertain and cherish Melancholy, it would leave us at length in spight of our Hearts. Grief, 'tis true, when 'tis fresh, may find Tenderness and Compassion; but as it grows old, it grows ridiculous, and nothing more odious. If a miserable Wretch were ever the better for sobbing and lamenting, he should have my consent to spend a day and night in Sighs and Groans, beating of his Breast, and in all the Outrages that were ever exercis'd by a disconsolate Creature. But if Howling and Crying be to no purpose, let us betake our selves to an invincible Resolution, and struggle with our Calamities. The Pilot deserves to be thrown over-board, that quits the Helm in a Storm, and sets the Ship adrift, at the mercy of the Billows: But he that stands to this Tackle, and bears up against foul Weather, (though he sinks with the Vessel) perishes yet with Honour, and the Comfort of having done his Duty.

C H A P.

C H A P. XVI.

Of Hope and Despair; and how we are to moderate both.

I. **T**HAT Hope which is not plac'd upon Almighty God, is vain and deceitful, and in effect, but a waking Dream. Why should any Man torment himself with the expectation of things to come? He that desires nothing, hopes for nothing; and he that contemns all earthly things, desires nothing; for *no Man can desire what he despises*. Nor is it enough for any one to tell me, that the thing he hopes for is easily compass'd, or that his Hopes never deceiv'd him as yet; for let them be what they will, they carry great Trouble, Uncertainty, and Anxiety along with them. A Man should no more hanker after or grasp at things out of his reach, than leave the plain Way, to wander among Thorns and Precipices: No less uneasie is the one to the Mind, than the other is to the Body. He that lives in Hope, has not one Moment of quiet, so long as the Will wants the thing it hopes for.

II. We should never cast an Eye upon any thing, either without us, or about us, but with this Consideration: *It is all transitory and frail*. How strangely do we forget our selves! Are we not born mortal? And this Day, nay this very Hour, what Assurance have we of it? Do we not live upon Trust, and is not Death at the very heel of us? It is by God's Power and Mercy that we live and have a Being. From him we have receiv'd all, and when he calls, to him it is that we are to render all without repining. *He's an ungrateful Debtor,*

tor, that speaks ill of his Creditor. There is not any thing under Heaven, that we ought to hope for: And Heaven it self is the only warrantable Subject of our Hope.

III. Despair proceeds from a sluggish Abjection of Mind, too great an Apprehension of Difficulties; a criminal Distrust of our selves, and a defect both of Resolution and Industry. This Weakness may be overcome, by suggesting Encouragements drawn from the Examples of those that have extricated themselves out of greater Straits. Let us begin then, and press forward; for God will assist our Endeavours, and all Difficulties will be made easie to us, so soon as we shall have relinquish'd the false Opinions that have mis-led us. There's not any thing befalls us, but what was allotted us from Eternity, and it is either tolerable or otherwise. If it may be born, we are not to despair, but to endure it: If not, it will make a quick end both of it self, and of us too, and we are not to despair there neither. If we cannot endure it, 'tis short; if we can, 'tis light. It is in our own Power, to make many things tolerable, by balancing them with the benefit and convenience that attends them. *Affliction is the occasion of Virtue.*



C H A P. XVII.

Of Fear: The Vanity of it, and how to master it. Rashness to be avoided; and something more of Anger.

I. I Have known many People, without any visible, or so much as probable Danger, run raving up and down, as if they were stark mad, upon the bare apprehension of some imaginary Mischief to befall them. The Torment they endure is unspeakable; what betwixt the Impression of a present, and the Apprehension of a Mischief to come. There are many Misfortunes which we create, and have a Being only in the Imagination. There are others which threaten us indeed, but afar off, and they'll come soon enough of themselves, without being drawn on before their time. There are some so weak, as to govern themselves by Dreams and idle Fancies, without any reasonable ground of Conjecture at all; and to be startled at every foolish Rumour. A word mistaken is enough to break their sleep; and the Apprehension of a Great Man's Displeasure, puts them directly out of their wits; not so much for the Displeasure it self, as for the Consequences of it. But these are vain Thoughts, and the vainer, the more troublesome. For Truth has its Measure and Limits, but Imagination is boundless. And the main Difference I find betwixt the Sufferance of a Misfortune, and the Expectation of it, is this: The Grief for what hath befalln us, will over; but the fear of what may befall us, hath no end.

II. He that would deliver himself from the Tyranny of Fear, let him take for granted, that what he

he fears will come to pass; and then enter into a Computation upon the whole matter. Upon this Deliberation, he will certainly find, that the things he fears are nothing so terrible in themselves, as in the false Opinion of them. 'Tis a hard case for a Man to be banished, or laid in Irons. 'Tis a terrible pain to be burnt alive. And yet we have many Instances, not only of Christians, but Infidels also, that have Despised and Triumphed over all this; and more indeed, than this amounts to. *Stephen* suffered death with a quiet Constancy of Mind, and pray'd for his Persecutors. *Laurence* rejoices upon the Gridiron, and braves the Tyrant. The Virgin *Appollonia* leaps into the Fire. *Anaxarchus* is cheerful in the Mortar, under the very stroak of the Hammer. *Socrates* takes off his Cup of Poyson, as if it had been a Frolick, and drinks the Health to *Critias*. What is there now so terrible in the Faggot or the Gibbet, or in the train of Executioners, and Officers of Justice that attend it? under this Pomp and Formality, which serves only to fright Fools, there lyes Death; that, which so many thousands of Men, Women and Children, have not only Welcom'd, but Courted. Set aside the noise, the hurry, and the disguise in these Cases, and let every thing appear in its own shape, we shall find there is nothing terrible in the matter, but the mere apprehension of it: And that it fares with us great Boys, as it does with little ones; our very Nurses, and our Playfellows, if they be but dreft up with a white Sheet, or a Vizard, are enough to put us out of our Senses. Nay, and we are the fillier Children of the two, for we are struck with a Panick Terror, not only at the Counterfeit of a Reality, but the very Counterfeit of a Counterfeit torments us.

III. Bring it now from a particular to a common Cause; and let every Man say to himself, I have a frail and mortal Body, liable to distempers, sickness, and, in the conclusion, to death it self. All this I have known from a Child, and the many ill Accidents that threaten me. What have I now to fear? Bodily Sickness? My Soul will be the better for't. Poverty? My Life will be the safer, and the sweeter for't. Loss of Fortune? Why then farewell all the Cares and Dangers that accompany it. Loss of Credit? If I suffer deservedly, I shall detest the Cause, but approve the Justice: If wrongfully, my Conscience will be my Comforter. Shall I fear a Repulse? or a Disappointment? There never was any Man, but wanted something or other that he desir'd. Banishment? I'll Travel, and Banish my self. Loss of my Eyes? It will deliver me from many Temptations. What if Men speak Evil of me? It is but what they are us'd to do, and what I deserve. Shall I fear Death? It is the very condition I came into the World upon. Well! But to die in a strange Country! All Countries are alike, to him that hath no abiding-place here. But for a Man to die before his time! As if a Man should complain of having his Shacles knockt off, and being discharged of a Prison before his time. We are not to look upon Death or Banishment, or causes of Mourning, as Punishments, but only as Tributes of Mortality. *It is a senseless thing to fear what we cannot shun.*

IV. Let us take heed of being over-confident; and venturing at things beyond our strength; for, no Man is more liable to miscarriages, than he that presumes too much upon himself. All our sufficiency and strength comes from above, and we can do nothing of our selves, without God's assistance!

fistance: Our presumption arises from too high a conceit of our selves, and too mean a one of our Adversaries; together with a rash headiness of Nature, that understands neither Reason nor Business. The wise Man is cautious, and adventures upon nothing, without first taking the measure of his own Abilities: Whereas he that is over-hasty, and presumptuous, falls on without any consideration; and, after the first effort, when he finds the difficulty greater than he imagined it, his courage falls and faints; and he comes, at last, to an acknowledgment of the vanity and unadvisedness of his mistake. *Security is the fore-runner of Calamity.*

V. He that would govern his Anger, must begin with a contempt of the pretended Causes of it: For it is not the supposed Injury, but the false Opinion of it, that does us the mischief: We provoke, teize and enflame our selves, and then cast the blame upon others. *No Man is injur'd, but by himself.* We shou'd do well to cokes and flatter our Minds, as Nurses do their Children. *Be quiet, and thou shalt have it;* be not angry, do not struggle and make a noise, and thou shalt see, things will be well enough yet. I would have a Man set apart some certain days, and say to himself, *I am resolved, that nothing shall make me angry this day, whatever it be.* Let him but proceed then, from a day to a week; from a week to a month, and so on; he shall soon grow so much the Master of himself, as to make that his Diversion, which formerly was his Torment. A gentle and peaceable Humour, is a very agreeable Comfort in Society; but to him that is endued with it, incomparably a greater Blessing: For in all Difficulties it is still cheerful, and in all Conflicts victorious.

C H A P. XVII.

Of the Faculties of the reasonable Soul. The Understanding is not to be employ'd upon Curiosities. What study is best. The evil of meddling with other Peoples manners. Not to concern our selves for other Mens Opinions. Of Self-denial.

I. OUR Understanding was given us by Almighty God, to the end that we might know him: But Sin has given it two wounds, Ignorance and Blindness; for we are at a loss, first, in the knowledge of Truth; and then, in the knowledge of Good and Evil. We are therefore (in this state of Danger) to take at least as much care, what we admit into the Understanding, upon the Recommendation of the Senfes, as whom we receive into a Town, in the time of a close Siege, or a raging Pestilence. The Senfes make the Tendre, and the Understanding takes, and whatsoever the Judgment allows, is propounded to the Will. But the Sense presents both Good and Evil; and it belongs to the Mind, either to entertain, or refuse.

II. We are, in the first place, to keep the Understanding from amusing it self upon vain Subtilties and Curiosities: It was given us for Divinity, and substantial Wisdom; and it is our part to husband it, and not squander away so excellent a gift upon Trifles. He that ventures upon an unknown Herb, to learn the Temper and Qualities of it, if it prove a strong Poyson, his Life is hazarded in the very scrutiny, without attaining his end: Such is the case of those that will be prying into

into impertinent and abstruse Curiosities; they are lost beyond recovery, even before they so much as know what they would be at. *To know that which a Man is never the better for, is next door to downright Ignorance.* He that would be truly wise, does not study to get a Name, but to order his Life; and how to relieve his Mind, rather than how to delight it. What is any Man the better for knowing the Influences of the Stars, if he be still a stranger to his own Infirmitie? For all the Flowers and Excellencies of Elocution, if he has not yet learned to hold his Tongue? Let him that delights in Novelty, renew himself: That takes up-on him to refute other Mens Errors, begin with his own. Let him that delights in History, to see what other People have done, consider in the first place, what he is to do himself. Let him that makes it his Business to compound differences among his Neighbours, not forget to pacifie his own tumultuary Passions. We spend so much time upon Superfluities, that we have none left for things necessary. *That's the necessary knowledge, that makes us rather Good than Learned.*

III. To what end is it, that we puzzle and perplex our selves about Controversies, which, for the most part, would be more for our Credit to contemn, than to resolve. It is the better half of our study, to learn those things, which we are, in honour, to forget, as soon as we have them, but there is an Intemperance of Knowledge, as well as of other things. There is no end of Books: Our Libraries are furnish'd for Sight and Ostentation, rather than for Use. The very Indexes are not to be read over in an Age. And in this multitude, how great a part of them are either dangerous, or not worth the reading? It may be

well enough to take a taste of many; but when that's done, we are to set up our rest upon a few. It is not so much from Books, as from Practice and Examples that we are to expect the Improvement of the Mind.

IV. *Oh the Vanity of Mortals!* to spend our Lives and our Spirits upon Human Arts and Sciences, (as if we were never to die) without any regard at all to the thought of a Life everlasting, which is not to be acquired by profound Learning, but by Probity of Manners, and Simplicity of Virtue. What are we the better for the Voluminous History of the World, even if we had it all without Book? for the Records of all the Tyrannies and Rebellions that ever past from the Creation of the Universe, to this Instant? How much better were it to check the growth of our own Iniquities, than to transmit the story of other Peoples. Geometry teaches us to measure our Lands; but why do we not first learn to measure our Necessities? Arithmetick teaches us to count what we have got, but why do we not rather learn to contemn it, and chearfully to part with that, which with so much carking and caring we have scrap'd together? Musick shews us how to make up a Harmony of several Voices; but it were much more for our benefit, to learn the Art of Reconciling our Sense and Reason: Nor is the skill of Flats and Sharps near so much to our purpose, as the Science of moderating the Affections; so as neither to be puffed up with Prosperity, nor dejected in Adversity. Not that I dislike the knowledge of these things; for I esteem them to be very Laudable Accomplishments: But in the second place, and after we have studied our selves, and what more concerns us. *He that knows every thing*

but

but himself, knows in effect as much as comes to nothing.

V. It is a sordid and infamous humour, to be prying into, and medling with other Peoples matters; to be observing and descanting upon Lives and Manners; and to make the worst of every thing. What have I to do with the Servant of another, who is to stand and fall to his own Master? *The great Judge of the World has reserv'd Judgment to himself; and he that presumes to judge his Neighbour, invades the Throne of the Almighty:* Let every Man enter into the Privacies of his own Conscience, and see what Good is wanting in him, what ill abounds; and he'll find work enough at home to employ his Pragmatical Spleen upon, without hunting after the faults of others. And there's no Protection neither, against the Sting of a malevolent Wit, and a licentious Tongue. Was not our Saviour himself taunted and traduced by the Jews? And is not the Holy Gospel daily perverted by Hereticks? It is with distemper'd Minds, as with melancholic Bodies; whatsoever they take, turns to Corruption. The Action is most commonly qualified by the Intention; and is Good or Bad accordingly: But *this is only known to him that searcheth the Heart and the Reins.* But let the Action we Censure be never so Foul, and the Person never so Guilty; what is it yet to us? How unchristian an Indecency is it to expose the Nakedness of our Brother for a Publick Spectacle? Why do we not rather observe our selves? Judge and Condemn our selves? and turn the Point of our Malice upon our own Hearts? *He that's a severe Judge to himself, shall escape the Judgment of the most High God.*

VI. They that are so quick-sighted, to discover other Peoples failings (out of a desire to be

thought shrewd Men) are commonly as jealous of being paid in their own Coyn; and of being hated, contemned, ill thought of, and ill spoken of by others. Toward the subduing of this Vice, we are first to moderate the Pleasure we take in the Acclamations and Applauses of the Multitude, and then utterly to cast away all curiosity of knowing what the World thinks or says of us; for we are many times possest with a Suspicion, that such or such a Man talks lightly, and has a mean Opinion of us, who is so far from speaking amiss, that he says nothing at all of us, nor has us so much as in his Thought. Let a Man say with the Apostle, *If I pleased Men, I were not the Servant of Christ.* 'Tis little to me that I am judged by you, &c. Such as we are with God, such we truly are, and neither the better nor the worse for the Opinion or Discourse of Men. *'Tis much better to be good, than to be so esteem'd.*

VII. If we would have nothing fall out contrary to our Will, we must absolutely lay it down, and Will nothing at all, but in submission to the Will of God. This is the way that leads to a true Tranquility of Mind, and to a lasting Peace. He that w^{shes}es for nothing but what he should, may live as he would. It is the only Felicity of this Life, to square our Wills to the Will of God. He who from all Eternity has appointed the End, has likewise appointed the Means; and whether the way be smooth or craggy, thro' Prosperity or Adversity, it is still what God has allotted us, in order to our eternal Bliss. He that obeys Divine Providence, and follows it cheerfully, does well and wisely: For let him lag and hang off never so much, he'll be forced to follow in spight of his Teeth. (Beside the Impiety of his Disobedience.) *God Almighty leads the willing, and draws the unwilling.*

C H A P. XIX.

*Of the State of Proficients. Divers Helps
to Improvements. The value and the use
of Time. God is always present.*

I. IT is a good step toward Virtue, for a Man to be conscious of his own Iniquities, and to desire to mend; without which we go backward every Day, from bad to worse. When we are once in the way, we must go on as we began; and the more haste we make, the sooner shall we enjoy the serenity of Mind which we aim at. *It is a good sign, when a Man comes to see his Failings better than he did:* As it is in a Patient, when he comes to be sensible that he is sick. Every Man is apt to flatter himself, and therefore let us have a care of being over-credulous. If, upon the lifting and examining of our Hearts and Thoughts, we find an abatement of our Lusts, a greater firmness of Mind than ordinary, and a more absolute Command of our selves, we are in a fair way of Proficiency and Improvement. It is an Inestimable Blessing, for a Man to be Master of himself, and to be at Untiy with himself. *A good Man is unchangeably the same. A wicked Man is perpetually at variance with himself.*

II. It is but one Day's Work to arrive at the highest pitch of Holiness, if we would but turn with our whole Hearts, from the Creature to the Creator. Now whether our Conversation be sincere or no, we shall know by these Marks: If we be out of love with Vanities and transitory things: If we delight in Solitude and Contemplation: It that please us best that is perfectest: If

we prefer a good Conscience to God-ward, before an empty Reputation among Men. If we do all this, it goes well with us: But *the most powerful Inducement to Virtue of all the rest, is the daily Meditation of the Life and Passion of Christ.* That Story is the Book of Life, and sufficient to bring us to Heaven, if all the Libraries in the World, Authors and all, were utterly destroy'd. But it is not yet enough, barely to know Christ, and meditate of him, unless we likewise imitate him, and lead our Lives in conformity to his Word and Example. The way to rectifie that which is crooked, is to bring it to the Rule.

III. It was well said of some-body, that good order is as necessary to the Mind, for the gaining of Virtue, as it is to the Body for the recovery of Health; for there are a thousand things in the way else, to divert and retard us. As, the inordinate love, either of our selves or of any thing else: Impatience in Losses; the over-much indulging of our selves, in our Appetites and Pleasures, whether in Meat or Drink, Conversation, or the like; the plunging of our selves over Head and Ears in the Affairs of this World, and being too much wedded to our own Opinions; rejecting the Motions and Inspirations of the good Spirit within us. These Obstacles must be removed, and we are to encounter them with Resolution and Vigour; we are to proceed with Readiness, Alacrity and a good Intention, and with an Industry answerable to the Excellency of the Work in hand. It is not the number of our Exercises, but the thorough doing of them; not so much the thing it self, as the manner of doing it, that avails us.

IV. Our Days are upon the Wing: Time flies away, and there is no recalling of what's past: Our Life depends upon the Future, and is still looking forward: And we consume it in mere Preparation, 'till old Age and Death it self overtake us, unprovided for it. It is in our Lives as upon the way, in good Company. The time passes away in Chat and Discourse, and we are at the end of our journey before we are aware. For, sleeping or waking, we still keep on our pace, and pass insensibly to our last end, even before we think on't: What is it then that we trifle for? Why do we linger and delay? Time must be laid hold on immediately, or it is gone for ever. The value of a day, nay, of an hour, is inestimable, and the loss of it irreparable. If a Man comes to enter upon our Estates, or there falls out any dispute about a Land-mark, we must presently to Law and Arms. But our Time and our Life is open for any Man to take that pleases; so Prodigal are we in the only case where we may be honestly covetous. We are not to compute Life by the number of years, but by the well employing of them; and let the Oldest Man alive discount for the time he has spent in Sleep, Luxury, Quarrels, Visits, lazy Saunterings up and down; in doing just nothing at all, or at best, nothing to the Purpose, without so much as minding what he did. and he shall find, that at the end of a Hundred Years he dies a Child. We are apt enough to lament the loss of our Time past, and yet we lose more still in the Lamentation: Why do we not rather improve the present, while we have it, to prevent a late Repentance? why do we lose this instant, which is our own, and pretend to dispose of the Future which is out of our Power? In effect,

fect, Life is but a moment, and delay is absolute loss. *He that puts off to day, comes too late to tomorrow.*

V. It is to Almighty God, that we are to direct all our Thoughts, Words and Deeds; to the exclusion of any other Object, applying our selves wholly to his Blessed Will. *He that takes God for his Guide, shall be sure never to miss his way:* Nor shall he miscarry in any of his affairs, who directs all to God's Glory; and lives, as in his holy Presence: Neither is it possible for any Man to avoid his All-seeing Eye, which reaches not only to our Words and Actions, but pries into the Thoughts of our Hearts. And he's in a great mistake, that when the Door is bolted, and the Curtains drawn, reckons himself to be alone; for there is no place so dark, or so retired, as to exclude the Omnipresence of God, *in whom we live, move, and have our Being:* Whether we Eat or Drink, Walk or Discourse, our Thoughts are to be always upon him; we are to do our utmost, to render our selves worthy of the favour of his Countenance, and not to do those things in the sight of an All-seeing God, which even before a Temporal Judge we would be ashamed of. Every Man should live, as if there were only God and himself in the World; and chearfully imbrace the Lot which Providence has set out for him, whether Prosperity or Adversity. We are to seek God, and whether we find him by this way or that way, it matters not, provided that we find him at last.

C H A P. XX.

Of the good of Solitude. Ill Company to be avoided. The Vices of the World, and what they are. Virtue the study of a Proficient. How to know when we have attained it.

I. IT is a great Argument of a clear and well composed Mind, when a Man is at Unity with himself; for he approaches, in some degree, to the Felicity of God himself, who, in himself, is blessed for evermore. Neither can he be said properly ever to be alone, that is never separated from Christ. If so it be, that we cannot hold our Tongues, we may talk to our selves, but let us be sure then that we talk to honest Men. If you would know now, what a Man should say to himself; why truly the same things that he is used to say to others of his Neighbours. Let him speak ill of himself, to himself; let him call himself to an Account for all his Sins, and punish himself for whatsoever he finds amiss, and he'll never want matter to work upon. Let him retire and give himself Leisure for Contemplation; but let him then conceal his very Retirement. He that makes Proclamation of his Solitude, retires only to be more publick, which is a kind of slothful Ambition. Now there must be a Retirement of the Mind too, as well as of the Body, to make it beneficial and comfortable. We must withdraw our selves from all vain Employments, and not only from Company, but from all things too which do not concern us; we must not admit so much as any Creature, no nor the very

Image

Image or Idea of any Creature, into our Thoughts; we must blot out of our Minds, all the Toys and Fooleries of this World, and in the most secret recess of our Souls, address our selves to God alone. In this Privacy of Mind, in this Oblivion of all idle and impertinent things, we shall gain peace of Heart, true Tranquility and Repose. Let this be our Retreat then, and this our Busines: For we shall certainly find God there, where the Creature is abandon'd.

II. It is rarely seen, that any Man is good himself, who keeps ill Company; for there is nothing so destructive of good Manners, as to Herd with the multitude, who do commonly leave a Man worse than they found him. It is not for a tender and unsettled Mind, to resist the force of ill Examples, that break in upon a Man, with a kind of Authority and Credit; for Men are apt to run over to the stronger side. The Man of the *Gusto*, gains upon us by degrees, and takes us by the Palate. A rich neighbour strikes us with Envy, or Avarice, and many a Man has been undone by an ill example. Our very Parents, our Companions, our Servants, draw us some way or other into Mischiefs. The whole World is full of snares and hazards, and we are no sooner out of our Mother's Belly, but we are encompassed with dangers, as if we were dropt into the quarters of an Enemy. There is not any Man living hardly, that does not either recommend some Wickedness to us, or imprint it upon us, or at least infect us with some evil disposition, before we are aware. Oh the delicious sweetness of those blessed hours that a Man spends in his private Family or Study, apart from the noise and busines of the People! How calm! How gentle! not so much as a Cloud,

or

or a breath of Wind, to disturb the Serenity of his Mind. But, by and by, somebody calls him out; away he goes, gets more Company, makes up a Club, and never fails of falling into some excess or other, and returning worse than he went out. This is the Fruit of Publick Conversation; but we are not sensible of the damage we receive in Company, 'till we come afterward to reflect upon it in Solitude. Let us make what haste we can then into our selves, before we are overcome with the Contagion of the Vicious Multitude. *The Mind that is most contracted, is most cheerful.*

III. Let a Man but imagine himself upon the top of an high Mountain, and there taking a Prospect of the miserable World, he shall quickly see enough to put him out of love with it, and all that's in it. Nothing but Robberies at Land, Pyracies at Sea, the Tumults and Horrors of War, Human Blood spilt like Water; Sin and Iniquity broken loose, and beating down all before it: Look into the Cabinets of great Men, and you shall there see such spectacles of Brutal Lust, as cannot but disgust and nauseate the very Actors themselves; and every where else, so boundless a Licence and Disorder, that we would almost swear the whole World were a *Bedlam* (but the Mad-men are too many for the Sober) and their number is their Justification. The Laws themselves are turn'd into Snares, and Innocency is there Invaded, where it ought to be Protected. The not-guilty is in more danger than the guilty; and the Judge more criminal than the Prisoner: *For where there is Money, there can be no Transgression.* A Pack of calumniating Knaves in one Place; a Troop of fawning Parasities in another; here Feuds, there Flatteries; one Man wallowing in his

his Wine, another stretching himself upon his Bed. Infatiable Avarice on the one side; Slavish Ambition on the other. In all Publick Assemblies more Vices than Men: Sins of irreverence toward God, injustice toward our Neighbour, and Abuse of the Creature: So that being guilty of all Sins, they are to expect that all Sins will rise in Judgment against them. One would think that this view of the World might be sufficient of it self to take off any Man's Heart from the love of it: But when a Man considers the difficulty of mastering so many Temptations, and bearing up against so many ill and powerful Examples, certainly he cannot chuse but bethink himself of a Retreat. It is a hard matter for a Man to love Innocence, where Wickedness is in Authority and Credit: If it does not absolutely corrupt us, it will yet puzzle and hinder us. The only way to be safe and quiet, is to retire into our selves, where we may look upon the World, without being endanger'd by it. He that has renounced external things, and withdrawn into himself, is invincible; the World is to him as a Prison; and Solitude, a Paradise.

IV. But we are never the better for quitting the World, if we do not vigorously apply our selves to the Study and Practice of Virtue; without which we can have no Comfort, no Repose; and having that, we can want nothing. There are three things that seem to have a fair Analogy one with the other. In all things, and above all things, is God himself; among Sensibles, is Light; and among the Perfections of the Mind, is Virtue. God is the Light and Virtue of all things; Light is the Virtue of the World, and the Image of God: Virtue is the Light of the Mind, by which

which we are called, and become the Children of God. Without a pure Mind, there is no attaining of this Perfection; for Virtue is the Perfection of a Man, that repairs all our Failings, and fills us with Delight; she raises up our fleshly Nature, in things Spiritual: She is the Rule of Life, a Light to the Blind: She beats down Sin, and brings us to Eternal Life. In the study of Virtue, we are to learn what it is (in the first Place) both in general and in particular: *For no Man seeks he knows not what.* We are then to keep our selves in the continual practice of it: Like Soldiers that will be still exercising and skirmishing, even in time of Peace, and without an Enemy; very well understanding, that these Encounters, though but represented, and in jest, keep them in Breath, and readiness for Assaults in earnest. Let a Man suppose himself under all the Oppression and Indignity imaginable; *stript to his Shirt, and thrown upon a Dunghill;* and let him then make tryal of his Patience, as if this were his very case indeed. He that exercises himself before the Battel, will be more resolute in it: *He that has often lost Blood goes chearfully to the Combat.*

V. The Habits of Virtues, are the Work of Time: And we shall know when we are possest of any of them, by these Tokens. We have made a good Progress toward any Virtue, when we have extinguish'd, or at least in a large measure suppress the contrary Vice; when we have brought all our Passions to a Submission and Obedience unto Reason; when the Practice of Virtue is become not only easie, but delightful to us; when in Contempt of Temporizers, we stand up with a generous Freedom, in the Vindication of Virtue, against all Opposers; when we come once natural-

naturally to abominate those things, which formerly we doated upon with a depraved Inclination; when the Love of Virtue is grown so habitual to us, that we allow our selves in nothing that is ill, no, not so much as in a Dream; when we come to imitate what we approve in others, and to abstain from what we reprehend; when nothing that is amiss seems little to us, but worthy of our greatest Care and Diligence to avoid; when we can see our Equals preferred, without Envy; when we have the Honesty to confess our Faults, and submit them to Correction and Re-proof; when we can content our selves in the Testimony of a good Conscience, without making Publication of our good Works, (which in the very doing are their own Reward;) when the whole Business of our Life is Virtue, which is always in Act, and never tir'd.

C H A P. XXI.

Of Theological Virtues. Faith is to be manifested in our Works. In God alone we are to put our Trust. Motives to the Love of God. The Love of our Neighbours shews it self in good Offices. An Exhortation to Charity.

I. **F**AITH is the Basis of all other Virtues, and the Foundation of Christian Life; without which, no Man can please God. This is the Wisdom that has subdued the World, to which we are firmly to adhere, without any unnecessary Curiosity or Disquisition. But we are to do, as well

as to believe; for *Faith without Works is dead*. Now while we are Christians in Profession and Discourse, let us have a care, not to be Infidels in our Lives and Manners. If we believe the Gospel, why do we not obey it? If we do believe an Eternity, why do we prefer a momentary Life and Pleasure before it? What are we the better for believing that which is true and good, if in our Actions we be false and wicked? A good Faith and an ill Life will hardly stand together: *For he that believes aright, will practise what he believes.*

II. Since most certain it is, that all things are ordered and governed by an Over-ruling Providence, insomuch that not a Bird of the Air, nor the Leaf of a Tree, falls to the Ground without it: This methinks should give us Courage and Confidence in all Extremities; and a full Assurance that our Heavenly Father will never fail us at a time of need. Let us therefore cast our selves wholly upon the Mercy and good Pleasure of Almighty God; and not depend upon the Help and Counsels of Man, which are deceitful and uncertain. What if matters go crois, and belide our Expectation, so as to unsettle the whole Course of our Thoughts and Affairs? What if we should be visited with Sickness, threatened with false Accusation; perhaps worse Accidents? Our Trust is in God, our Dependance upon him: And who knows but the Divine Wisdom has made choice of these Afflictions, as the Means to bring us to Eternal Glory? The Afflictions of this Life are as nothing to him, that has his Heart fixed upon the Blessings of a better: Whatsoever a Man hopes for, he may compass, and reckon himself as possest of what he believes.

III. Charity is the Mistress of all Virtues, and is directed either to God, or to our Neighbour. To God, in the first Place; whom we are to love with all our Heart, with all our Soul, and with all our Strength; (merely for himself, and for his infinite Goodness) above all things that are amiable: For, it is to his Grace and Mercy, that we are indebted for our Being, Life, Motion, Sense and Understanding. He it is that hath delivered us from the Bondage of Satan, dignified our Souls with infinite Privileges, and prepared Eternal Life for us, of his own free Goodness, without any antecedent Merit. The Heaven, the Earth, the Air, the Water, and the whole Universe, call to us aloud, to love and serve that God, who has made all these things for our service. If the good of the Soul be the thing we look for, what need we go further than to God himself? who is the only, and the Sovereign Good, great and desirable beyond imagination. It is only by Love (though in a vast disproportion) that we can acquit our selves to the Almighty, in kind. Love is Active, not Idle: It does not seek its own: It surmounts all difficulties; and, *He that loves truly, may die, but cannot be overcome.*

IV. Nature has implanted in all reasonable Creatures, a love of Society, which ought to work more really in Christians, who are called to the same Faith and Glory, and are Members of the same Body. No Man can love God, that does not love his Neighbour. Now this Love to our Neighbour is exercised in conferring of Benefits, doing all sorts of good Offices, and going before others in Humility and Kindness. The grace and value of a Bounty lies much in the cheerful and the speedy applying of it: For there must be no stop but

but in the modesty of the Receiver; there needs no more to the relief of a necessitous person, than that we know his wants: For, it breaks the Heart of a Generous Man, to be put to beg it; and the Favour is ten times as great, when it prevents the asking of it. It is rather a purchase than a gift, when a Man receives a Benefit upon a Request. He that gives a Prayer, or a Blush, for a good turn, pays dear for't. In cases where we could not fore-see, or prevent a suit, we are however to shew, that we would have done it, if we could, by our manner of granting it; which ought to be speedy and cheerful. There must be good words, as well as good deeds: It must be done frankly, and without either Vanity or Reproach. It is a great kindness to put a Petitioner quickly out of his pain, by stopping his mouth, and doing his business, so soon as ever we know it. And then, *we are not to blow a Trumpet, when we give an Alms.* The thing will speak it self; and, *he that sees in secret, will reward us openly.*

V. Among the Acts of Christian Charity, there is not any thing more acceptable to God, nor any more effectual proof of our Faith, than that compassion to the Poor, which we exercise in giving of Alms. Let us therefore have a care of despising the Poor, who though necessitous themselves, have it yet in their Power to make us rich. It is a kind of redeeming our selves with our Money; and turning an Instrument of Avarice, into an occasion of Mercy: Shall we give more for a place in a Play-houſe, than for a place in Paradise? We pay Duties and Taxes to Temporal Princes, let there be never so great a Dearth; and can we not afford, out of our Abundance, a Morsel of Bread to the King of Heaven, in his poor

Membris;

members? He that is close-handed to the Needy in his Distress, is guilty of his Brother's Blood. He that does not feed him, murtheres him. Our Thoughts are so much taken up with providing for our Heirs, that we never so much as think what shall become of our selves: But we had better abate a little of their Patrimony, than to hazard the main of our own Salvation. But let us come to a Reckoning, and see what are our Possessions in this World? What do we pretend to in the next? In Death we have nothing left us, but what we have sent to Heaven before-hand, by the hands of the Needy. Men of little Faith! There's our Treasure. A Thief may pick a Lock, and break open our Coffers here below, but Heaven is Impregnable.

C H A P. XXII.

Of Prudence. The Necessity and the Difficulty of it. The Duty of a Wise Man.

I. **A**S a Workman is nothing without his Line and Level; so neither are We, without Prudence. It is the Eye of the Soul, the Art of Life, the Guide of all our Actions, and the Rule of other Virtues: There is no living comfortably without it; but exceedingly difficult it is, and obscure. It is difficult: First, in regard of the Comprehension of it; for, it takes cognizance of the Universe, in it self, and in every part of it. Secondly, In respect of the Uncertainty of Human Affairs; which, by reason of infinite Variations and Accidents, and their dependencies upon divers

divers Circumstances, are hardly reducible to a Rule: Nay there are many times such contrarieties and disagreements, as are almost impossible to be reconciled. The Obscurity lyes in this, that we see only appearances of things, when the Springs and Causes that move them, are in the dark: We see only the top of the Buildings, but the Foundation is out of Sight: Beside, that the good or bad event of things is concealed in the unsearchable Decree of the Almighty; so that there are very few Men wise enough, to make the best of their busines.

II. Wisdom is the Product of Experience and Memory. The one teaches us what is best to be done; and the other minds us when we are to do it. He that commits himself to general Experiences, and does not venture out of his depth, is safe. To do wisely, a Man should first take a measure of himself: and next, of the matter he takes in hand, for fear of over-valuing his own strength. One Man is undone by presuming too much upon his Eloquence. Another runs himself out of his Fortune, for want of proportioning his Expence to his Estate. A third kills himself, with laying more upon an infirm Body, than it is able to bear: Wherefore we are to compare our Force with our Undertaking; and to have a care of Burthens that are too heavy for our shoulders. We should not meddle with any thing neither, but what we may hope to go through withal. The next thing is the choice of our Companions; for, we had need have a very good opinion of those People, with whom we propound to divide our Lives; and to look narrowly into their Conversation, that we be not ruin'd for our good will. We are (in Conclusion) to examine our selves
how

how we stand inclin'd to the thing in Question; for, 'Tis lost labour, to go about to force Nature.

III. It is a hard matter for a Man in Passion, to distinguish Truth and Honesty from Error and Delusion; so that it is a point of Prudence, not to enter upon any considerable Action in a Distemper of Mind: For there is no greater Enemy to Wisdom, than Precipitation, which brings many a Man to destruction, beyond recovery: Wherefore nothing is to be done headily, or without good Advice. Men are naturally unstable, and irresolute: Providences uncertain; Events dubious: And Experience it self proves many times deceitful. In the multitude of Counsellours, there is safety. There are many easie People that judge of things by the Gloss and Out-side only; and so fall into great mistakes: But the wise Man passes a strict enquiry into the things themselves, abstracted from all Artifice and Imposture; into the Qualities, and not only into the Names of things. For, what is Mony, Reputation, Title, but a superficial Varnish to dazzle Children and Fools? We are to place our selves, as upon a Watch-Tower, where we may discover all Accidents afar off, without danger of being surpriz'd, and crying out with a senseless Multitude, *Who would have thought it!* We are likewise to proceed with deliberation, maturity of Judgment, and diligent examination of things; for fear of ill Circumstances: For there is so near a resemblance betwixt Vice and Virtue, that we may very well mistake the one for the other; and entertain that for Wisdom, which is nothing in the world but Craft and Cunning. When we have once made our Election, we are without delay to put our purpose in Execution: For, *good Counsel, without Execution, is of no effect.*

C H A P.

C H A P. XXIII.

*Of Justice and Religion; The Acts of both.
Repentance, and wherein it consists.*

I. **J**USTICE is a glorious and communicative Virtue; ordain'd for the common Good of Mankind, without any Regard to it self. This is it that keeps Men from worrying one another, and preserves the World in Peace. It is the Bond of Human Society, a kind of Tacit Agreement, and Impression of Nature; without which there is not any thing we do, that can deserve Commendation. The just Man wrongs no Body, but contents himself with his own; does good to all; thinks and speaks well of all: Gives every Man his Due, and is not any Man's Hindrance. Where he is in Authority, he commands righteous things; lies open to all; prefers a Publick Good before a Private; punishes the Wicked, rewards the Good, and keeps every Man in his Duty. Where he is in Subjection, he preserves Concord, lives in Obedience to Laws and Magistrates; contents himself in his Station, without hankering after Offices and Preferment; and is no Medler in other People's Matters. He is just for Justice-sake, and asks no other Reward than what he receives in the Comfort of being just.

II. RELIGION is the most excellent of Moral Virtues; and is exercis'd immediately upon the Honour and Worship of God: Of which this is the first Point, to know and believe him; and then to adore him for his Majesty and Goodness. Barely to know God, is not sufficient; for the Devils themselves do as much, that hate him: There must be Love and Adoration, as well as Knowledge.

I wish we did but discharge our Duty, as well as we understand it. There's none of us but acknowledges God's Providence in the ordering and governing of the World; his Omnipotency, Glory, and Goodness, and from its Mercy it is, that we hope for eternal Happiness. Why do we not pay him that Veneration then, which belongs to him? but prefer a little pitiful Dirt before him? Religion lies not so much in the Understanding, as in the Practice. He that is truly Religious, walks as in the Presence of God, and studies Perfection. The most acceptable Worship of God, is the Imitation of him, which does, in a manner, unite us to God, and God to us; but it must be free then from Wanderings, Negligence and Sin. It is to no Purpose to talk like Christians, and live like Infidels. This was it that made a famous heathen Philosopher to say, that there was Nothing more glorious than a Christian in his Discourse; Nothing more miserable in his Actions.

III. Repentance is that which brings us to a Detestation of Sin, with a full Resolution of Amendment, which reconciles us to God. To a Detestation, I say, of our past Sins, wherefore the Pleasure likewise is past; but the Guilt, the Torment, and the Condemnation sticks by us. To conceal our Iniquities, is to no purpose; for, *A Guilty Conscience passes Sentence upon it self.* Conscience is a kind of Tribunal which God Almighty hath set up in all reasonable Souls, where every Man is his own Accuser, and both Witness and Judge against himself. Let us therefore enter into a strict and daily Examination of our selves, and without hiding, mincing, or slipping of any thing, call all our Thoughts, Words and Deeds to a strict Account. He that says, *Lord be merciful to me*

me a Sinner, finds Mercy. What am I the better for concealing my Faults from other People, so long as I am conscious of them to my self? Unless I had rather be damn'd in private, than absolv'd in publick: Whatever we do with our Bodies, there's no avoiding of our Consciences; when we come once to cast off that Regard, we are most miserable.

IV. Our Life is divided into what is past, present, and to come. The present is but a Moment, and in the same Instant beginning and ending. The future has no Being, but only in Prospect; but whatsoever is past, we can summon and call before us at Pleasure. Many People are afraid of their own Memories, because if they look back, their Sins fly in their Faces. But this should not be. Frequent Reflection is the readiest Way to Reformation. The more we consider our Transgressions, the more shall we abhor them, and the less will be our Danger of a Relapse. Nothing more ordinary than for a Man that has 'scap'd Shipwreck in a Storm, to renounce the Sea upon it, and to bless God for the Mercy every Time he thinks of the Danger. It would be well if we had the same Sense in the Hazard of our Souls, which we have in that of our Bodies; and say, *It was a good 'Scape: Let us take it for a Warning, and run our selves no more upon the same Rock.* God hath spar'd us as often as we have offended; and shall we presume then, and be the worse for his infinite Goodness? We are many Times plodding and forecasting what we are to do for the future: And why can we not as well bethink our selves of what we have done already? For we must take Counsel of the Time past, if we intend to govern our selves as we should for the Time to come.

Many a Man might have come to be wise in the end, if he had not thought himself so before his time. *In the Way of Virtue there is no standing at a stay: He that does not daily advance, loses Ground.*

C H A P. XXIV.

Of Piety and Observance. The Commendation of Obedience and Gratitude. How to receive and how to requite a Benefit.

I. **I**T is a Point of Glory, beyond Expression, when a Man shall be able to say, *I am the Son that never disputed his Father's Command; but whether it were easie or hard, submitted to it with Clearfulness and Reverence: I am the Man that never fail'd in his Duty to his Country, to his Brethren and Relations; but made it the Business of his Life to oblige and serve them.* These we call Offices of Piety, where a Man's Country, Parents and Kindred are in the Concern. And what is Piety in this Case, we call Observance and Respect in others; that is to say in what relates to our Superiors, in Honour, Wisdom, Age, Religion, Holiness; as Princes, Prelates, Tutors, and the like, to whom we render all sorts of Reverence; whether by rising, uncovering the Head, giving the Way, alighting, kneeling, kissing the Hand or Robe, according to the Usage and Custom of the Place. Now the higher Esteem we have of them, the greater will be our Reverence; for it strikes in us an awe, and keeps us at such a Distance, as manifests the Sense we have of the disproportion betwixt us. *All Power is from God;* and what Respect

spect soever we render to our Superiors, it falls very much short of what we owe them, if we consider that we reverence God in them.

II. As by the Disobedience of our first Parents, Misery came into the World; so by the Obedience of the Son of God, are we reduced into a Capacity of Happiness, if we will but be obedient ourselves. Obedience is the Perfection of all things, and the firmest Connection of them with their Original; passing by a most admirable Circulation from God, unto God. Our Saviour gave it a Preference, above all other Virtues, and parted with his own Life to preserve it. It is a kind of Immolation of the Will, which is said to be better than Sacrifice. When my Superior, or the Law commands me, I am not to reason the Matter, and dispute it, or desire to be excus'd; but candidly and without Delay, to submit and to do what I am bidden, with an Equal Readiness and Alacrity, whether it be agreeable or unpleasant; provided always, that there be no clashing with the Will and Law of God; for in that Case, we may be allowed to be refractory and disobedient; but in all others we are to submit, without Expostulation or Murmur.

III. Gratitude is the Sense of a Debt for a Benefit received. In the first Place we are to set an Estimate upon the Benefit; which we are to value, partly for the Thing it self; and in Part, for the Kindness and Intention of the Benefactor. He that lies under an Obligation, should be often thinking of it, that it may never go out of his Mind; for, the Man that forgets a good Turn, will hardly requite it; and he that remembers it as he ought, has, in Effect, requited it already. In the Point of Gratitude, there's no Need of Money, Labour,

Felicity; but the Will passes for the Deed, be the Benefit never so considerable. Let the Receiver behave himself chearfully, and in such a Manner, as that the Benefactor may read his Satisfaction in his Countenance, and so reap some Fruit of his Bounty in the very Act of conferring it. It is a great Delight for a Man to see his Friend happy, much more, to make him so. The frank, kind and thankful Entertainment of a Favour, is a good Part of Payment. Some People cannot endure to think of their Debts, and those never had a Mind (from the Beginning) to be grateful; but he that extols a Kindness, and wishes he could requite it, though he despair on't, has as good as requited it. I have seen some People look askew, and squeemishly (I know not how) when they have borrow'd Mony, and take it in so odd a careless Fashion, as if they would have it thought the greatest Favour in the World for them to accept of it. He that is not sensible of an Obligation, does not deserve it; and a *cold Acknowledgement is worse than none at all.* It is the Part of an honest Man, in the very Instant of receiving a Benefit, to be think himself of a Return; for he's a Betrayer of his Trust, that will not restore what he has received. Nor is it enough to give a Man his own again, but Kindnesses are to be repaid with Interest. There is a Gratitude even in the Earth it self, that yields us our Grain again with Interest. And yet we must not be too quick neither in our Returns: Some there are, that so soon as ever they receive one Present, will be sure to send back another; as who should say, *now I'm out of your dirty Debt:* But this is rather an Affront, than a Requital.

C H A P. XXV.

Of Truth, and the Use of it. In Commendation of Singleness of Heart. The Acts of Fidelity.

I. **W**HATsoever we speak, write, or by any Action hint, or Gesture give to understand, let it be Truth; for nothing can be more scandalous than a false Tongue in the Mouth of a Christian. It is a vulgar and unmanly Sin, to speak one thing and think another. He that is Generous, will deliver things simply as they are, without Aggravating, Amplifying, Palliating, Shifting, or Juggling. Plain Truth must have plain Words. She is Innocent, and accounts it no Shame to be seen naked: Whereas the Hypocrite or Double Dealer, shelters and hides himself in Ambiguities and Reserves. The Evil-speaker hates the Light, as well as the Evil-doer. We are not to shift our Opinions, as we do our Cloaths, and to carry one Appearance in private, another in publick; one thing in the Face, and another in the Heart. Nature herself has an Abhorrence for it, as we see in Children, even before they come to the full Exercise of their Reason. The Lie is one of the first Reproaches they are sensible of, merely by the Impulse of an in-bred Aversion to Falshood; wherein is remarkable the Providence of God, that has implanted those Principles in our Souls, and made those Virtues natural to us, which are of absolute Necessity for the Support of human Life and Society. It is an abominable thing to belie the Truth, even in Words; but the Lie of Life is the most pernicious of all others. With what

what Face then can we exclaim against the Baseness of a Lying Tongue, when our whole Practice and Conversation is but one continued Lie all through? It's a great Matter for a Man to consist with himself.

II. Simplicity is a Virtue, scarce known among Men, but of great Worth and Value in the Acceptation of God; who being Integrity and Simplicity in the Abstract himself, requires likewise Simplicity of Heart in those that worship and serve him. By this Simplicity is understood an invariable Tenour of Life; which, without any Disguise, or Hypocrisie, is really what it seems to be. He that is indu'd with this Virtue makes no Scruple of frankly confessing his Imperfection, where there is Occasion. He deals candidly and clearly, without any fraudulent or crafty Design and Interest in his Proceeding: He believes all Men honest, and suspects no Body. But still under the Guard of a prudential Circumspection, he makes it his Study to be wise to God-ward, tho' the World calls him Fool for his Pains; and the single Business of his Life is to please God. Why do we trouble ourselves about many things, when there is but one thing necessary? which is, that by an undivided Affection, we may become acceptable in his Sight, who is Unity and Simplicity it self. *There is but one Way to one and the same End.*

III. I look upon Fidelity as one of the greatest and most valuable Advantages of Mankind. Take away this, and you destroy Commerce, Friendship, Leagues, and even Government it self. So necessary is this Virtue, and yet withal so scarce, that it is hardly to be found upon the Face of the Earth. Witness our Voluminous Conveyances; the infinite cautionary Circumstances of Witnesses,

Hands

Hands and Seals, the numberless Provisions of Security, to make a Contract firm and binding, and all little enough yet, to prevent Subornation and Fraud: So sordid are most People, that their Faith is not so dear to them as their Profit. How shameful a Confession is this of our Deceit and Wickedness, that we can neither trust nor be trusted without Witnesses and Securities! That we rather commit our selves to our Parchments, than to our Souls. But a Man of Honour and Integrity will sooner break his Heart than his Word; he will betray no Man's Secrets; he will not forfeit his Parole even to an Enemy; no, not if he had a Thousand Crowns and Lives at stake. He is not easie to promise any thing upon the sudden, because he knows that *hasty Promises are commonly followed with speedy Repentance*. But when his Word is once past, he stands as firm as a Rock, unmoveable, unalterable; that is to say, unless the Promise were unlawful, and in that Case the Obligation ceases.

CHAP. XXVI.

Of Friendship; the Qualities and Duties of it. Certain Precepts for Conversation.

I. **T**H E R E is not any thing more necessary, more commodious, or more delightful in the course of Human Life, than Friendship. It is the Kindness of two Persons grounded upon Virtue, and supported by a mutual Communication of all Comforts and Benefits. Now how great a Blessing this is, let any Man judge, when

two Minds are so prepared and disposed, that my Friend's Breast is as my own; my Secrets as safe there: And in case of my particular good, my own Soul is the less tender of the Two: He is my Companion in Solitude, my Counsellour in Difficulties, my Relief in Sadness, and the Joy of my Eyes whenever I look upon him. He is my Confessor in all my Scruples; and I never meet with him (so much as by chance) but I'm the better for him. There are some little Creatures that a Man takes no notice of at the present, 'till he finds afterward, by a Tumour or Inflammation, that they have stung him; and so it is in the Conversation of a true Friend; we find the Blessing of it in the Effects, but when or how we received the Impression, we know not. Friendship, to be perfect, must be Reciprocal; but it is nobler to love than to be beloved; and therefore, we are to consider Benevolence as the Foundation of it. The secondary Part of loving again, may have as much of Justice and Gratitude in it, as of Kindness. The most illustrious Friendship of all, is that which is cemented by a Religious Fear and Love of God, without any regard to Interest, Passion, Personal Kindness, Flattery or the like. *There can be no substantial and lasting Friendship between wicked Men.*

II. In the Choice of a Friend, we cannot be too wary. The Proverb bids us *eat a Bushel of Salt together before we resolve upon it.* But there are four Qualifications, however, which are essentially necessary to the perfecting of a Friendship; that is to say, Faith, Intention, Prudence, and Patience. The first is a matter of great Difficulty and Hazard; for there is hardly that Man upon Earth, whom we can safely entrust with the Privacies and Concernments

cernments of our Lives and Fortunes; and then, if we be deceiv'd, we're lost. In the second Place, the Intention must be pure; for otherwise, under the colour of a Celestial Friendship, there may be advanc'd some common and beastly design. There must be great Prudence too, for there occur many niceties in the enterchange of amicable offices and duties. The fourth Requisite is Patience or Constancy of Mind, which will enable a Man to endure any thing, rather than forsake a Friend in his Distress. If it shall be our good hap to meet with a Person whom we judge to be thus qualified, we are not to rest upon that Opinion without a further search. But to enquire what Friends he has had before, and how he has us'd them, and expect that he will hereafter be the same to us, which he has been formerly to others. *A Faithful Friend is a Living Treasure;* Inestimable while we have him, and never enough to be lamented when he's gone. There is not under the Canopy of Heaven so great a Blessing as to be link'd in a Friendship with a Person that loves a Man only for himself, without any respect to the Circumstances of Fortune, Table, good Humour or the like; that sets us right in our Mistakes, encourages, relieves and supports us in all Extremities. There is nothing more ordinary than to talk of a Friend, nothing more difficult than to find one. There is not one Man of a million, that loves *Gratis*; and he that loves for By-ends, cannot properly be said to be a true Friend. His Kindness is only governed by his Profit. Take away the Cause of his Friendship, and that goes too. *The Friendship is there most wanting, where we imagine it does most abound.*

III. We are to treat a Friend that stands in need of Reproof, as a Physician does his Patient; he spares neither Fire nor Lance to cure him. We must behave our selves with Liberty, Boldness, Constancy, without neglecting or dissembling any thing. *It is a damnable kind of Respect to pay a Reverence to Wickedness.* But still, let the Admonition be private, and managed with all possible Sharpness, both of Language and Behaviour. Before the Friendship is contracted, we do well to pause upon it, and deliberate; but when the League is struck, there must be nothing but Freedom and Confidence. *He that speaks to his Friend, does but talk to himself.* The truth of it is, a Man should so live, as not to trust even his own Heart with what he might not safely commit an Enemy. But seeing that there are many things, which Custom and Decency have made private, there is yet subject Matter enough for the Trust and Confidence of Friendship. Some People I have known so sick of a Secret, that they'd still throw it up to the next Man they meet; and publish in the Market-Place, what was only fit for the Ear of a particular Friend. Some again are so scrupulous on the other side, that they'll smother all, rather than trust the nearest Friend they have in the World; (no not themselves neither, if they could help it.) They are both in the wrong, as well for trusting every Body, as no Body; only the one is the honestest Mistake, and the other the safer. But the former is safe enough too, if we would but turn our Care from the Concealment of what we have done, to the doing of nothing that we care who knows.

IV. There is some Affinity betwixt Friendship and Courtesie, or Affability, which is a great Sweetner

Sweetner of Conversation, and keeps it within the Bounds of Modesty and few Words. A good Man has his Ears open and his Mouth shut; and desires rather to inform himself, than to publish himself; and to be a Gainer by the Company, rather than to squander away of his own. We should do well to acquaint ourselves with the Ways and Humours of those we converse with, how irregular soever, and not to take Notice of every trivial childish Impertinence we meet with. It is a low and womanish Weakness only to frequent those that say as we say, and blow us up with Flatteries and Applause. I would have a Man to speak sparingly of himself, and his own Affairs: Not to be over-stiff in defending his own Opinion; nor to talk too magisterially in a stile of Authority. When we encounter any thing that displeases us, let us but try, before we condemn it in others, if we be not guilty of it ourselves. By so doing, from whatsoever we see or hear, we may draw some Advantage. *And things are at a good pass, when one Man is the better for another Man's Faults.*

V. There are a sort of Men, that if they do but see any thing out of the *Mode* of the Place where they live, will presently stand gaping and laughing at it; and a Man of the Fashion, passes for little better with them than a Monster. This is a most inhuman Levity of Mind, to adore our selves, and make a Scorn of others. For we should set an Esteem upon every thing, for what it is, and not for what it seems to be. It is the Novelty, the Artifice, the Rarity, the Difficulty, the Pomp, the Reputation, and the outward Appearance, that enhances the Price of every thing with the People: Whereas the Wise Man rates it accord-

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ing to the Intrinsick Value, and reckons as nothing all the rest, which is so much the Wonder, and the Idol of the Brainsick Rabble. If we do not pinch and streighten our selves, it is our own Fault if we make not some Profit of whatever happens. Why do we not imitate the Comedians? They can weep without grieving; purchase without possessing; command, without Authority; threaten, without Revenge; and chide, without Indignation. The Busines is, they act other Mens Lives without any Concern of their own; and why we should not order our selves in Society with the same Indifference, I know not: The whole World is but a great Theatre, where there are as many Players as Men. Let it be our Care, as much as in us lies, to be rather Spectators than Actors; for the latter take all the Pains, and do but make Sport for the other.

C H A P. XXVII.

Of Liberality; what it is, and how to be exercised. Wherein it differs from Magnificence.

I. Do not call that Man Liberal, who does (as it were) pick a Quarrel with his Mony, and knows not how either to part with it, or keep it. (For he does not give it, but throws it away.) He is the Liberal Man that disposes of it according to Discretion and Reason. He proportions his Bounty to his Ability: He bestows it upon those that want it, and picks his Time too, when it may do them most good. Liberality is a Virtue that may be extended to the receiving, as well as to the conferring

conferring of Bounties, but the latter is here intended; for it is more Honourable to give, than to receive. It is not for any Man to say, *If I had a Fortune, I would do so or so*; for where there wants Power and Means, the very Will is sufficient. So sufficient, that in Truth, it is the main Point of the Obligation; which lies not so much in the Profit of the Receiver, as in the Intention of the Donor. Does any Man thank the Sea for letting him sail upon't? or his Orchard for a Basket of Apples? or the Wind for a favourable Gale? and yet these are all Benefits, but not conferr'd upon us by Voluntary Agents. Moreover, when we are in the Bountiful Humour, the Quick-doing is the Grace: We must not say to a Friend, *come again to morrow*; and so torment him with Delay and Expectation. He that gives heartily and kindly, gives speedily. A Generous Nature thinks he can never make haste enough. *The Favour is twice as welcome, that meets the Receiver at half Way.* A Courtesie comes so hard from some People, accompanied with so much sourness and insolence, that a Man had better be without it.

II. He that lives only to himself without any regard to the Good and Utility of his Neighbour, can never be happy. What is there that any Man shall pretend to spare, as his own? *when all Men of Estates, are in effect, but Trustees for the Benefit of the needy.* The Bags that we keep under so many Bolts, and which we have extorted, from the Fatherless and Widow, by Violence and Blood; if we reckon upon them as ours, we are exceedingly mistaken: For alas! they are but deposited with us for the Relief of others. Or however, 'tis but the rifling of our Coffers to Night, and they change their Master to Morrow. If we would secure

secure them and make them our own, we must bestow them. Nor is it so much a Bounty, as a Purchase, the parting with them. *For he that gives to the Poor, lends to the Lord;* and (for the temporal advantages of Money, Land, Houses and the like) secures himself of a blessed Eternity in exchange. Money is never of so much Value in the World, as when it is communicated and thrown among the Poor.

Where the Expence is moderate, we call it Liberality; where it is high and splendid, Magnificence; which arise both of them from the same Principle in the Mind: But as to the World, the one shews it self in small things, and the other in great. A Man may be liberal out of a small Fortune; but to be magnificent, there must be Opulence and Plenty; for Magnificence lies properly in the Glory of the work. If a Man should sell a Jewel, and give the product of it to Charitable Uses, this Man is rather said to be Liberal than Magnificent: But if he should bestow the value of that Jewel upon the Building of a Church, a Chappel, or any other splendid and publick Structure, he is then said to be magnificent. Under this Head are comprehended all works of great Expence, which relate to divine Worship, common Utility, publick Exercises and Entertainments. In things of this quality, there must be a proportion kept betwixt the Charge and the Estate. For where a Man borrows to build; and runs himself in Debt, for the Reputation of a great Name; such a work is not to pass for a Magnificence, but a Folly. He is the only Liberal and Magnificent Person, who takes from himself, whatsoever he bestows, or expends upon others.

C H A P. XXVIII.

Of Fortitude: The Duties of it. A Man of Resolution does contemn Death.

I. **S**UCH is the Softness, and the Infirmitie of Human Nature, that if it were not for this Virtue of Fortitude, we should all of us most shamefully abandon our Stations, and never so much as dare look Danger in the Face. It is commonly divided into Active and Passive; the one emboldning us to encounter all Difficulties, and the other enabling us to support them. It is not the part of a Man of true courage, rashly to throw himself into unnecessary hazards, but generously to bear up against Misfortune when it comes. He does not pray for terrible Encounters, but he laughs at them; when others are dejected, he holds up his Head, and keeps his Legs when others are at their length upon the ground. It is not Dishonour, Repulse, Exile, Oppression; no, not Prisons, Tortures, nor even Death it self that can startle him: He has a greatness of Mind, that sets him above all Passions, Distempers and Calamities whatsoever. He is not to be wrought upon to do an ill thing, by all the fair and foul means imaginable; let there be never so many Rubs in his Way, he presses forward still; acquires himself of his Duty, and goes thorow with his Work, in despight of all Impediments. He stands upright under any burthen whatsoever, and scorns to go before, when Power, Terror, and Violence shall have done their worst upon him. His Virtue carries him through all dangers; and what he suffers

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by the way he matters not, so he comes at last to his Journey's end.

II. As Men at Sea, in fair Weather, are still fitting and providing for a Storm; so should we in Good Fortune, be still providing and fortifying our selves against the Injuries of Bad. And this is to be done by putting the case at worst beforehand, and trying our selves upon the supposition, as if we were upon the real experiment. My *Children are all dead, the Vessel's lost, I am Banished, Wounded, Tormented, Diseas'd, Calumniated, Disgraced.* Well! and what does all this now amount to, more than what I have foreseen and contemn'd before? Our Joys and our Tears are allotted us from Eternity; and what Variety soever there may appear in the Circumstances and Accidents of our lives, all comes to this in the upshot; such as we are our selves, such are the things we have received, Transitory and Mortal. Now what cause is here of displeasure or complaint, if when we have lost all that belongs to us, we are yet our selves whole and entire? Life it self is a Debt, and when God calls for it in, is it not better to make a voluntary Payment, than to be forc'd to't? Epicurus is of opinion, that a *Wise Man may be happy upon the Wrack,* and take pleasure even in Phalarus his Bull. This is a bold word, and yet no more than we find verify'd in the constancy of divers of our Martyrs; who have died at the Stake with so much chearfulness, as if they had felt nothing at all of the Torture. To him that truly loves God, all Pains are turned into Comforts.

III. The thing which of all others most staggers our Resolution, is Death; and I do not at all wonder at the difficulty of bringing the Mind to a con-

contempt of *Life*, considering that (short of Heaven) it is of all comforts, incomparably the greatest Blessing. And yet it is not either for a wise Man, or for a Christian, to reckon Death in the number of Evils, which is, it self, the end of Evils; and the beginning of *Life* everlasting. Why should any Man be afraid to die, that is to live again? Or why should he be afraid to die, that is sure to die? In matters that are doubtful, we may be allow'd our Hopes and Fears: But Certainties are only to be expected, and *none but Madmen will struggle with invincible Necessity*. Children and stark Fools, we see, have little or no Apprehension of Death; and shall not our Reason then carry us as far as their Folly? Death is one Condition of *Life*; and he that has enter'd into the Obligation, must submit to the Condition.

IV. Nature has been so kind, as to allow us the Use and Benefit of all her Creatures for a certain season; when the Time is out, let us contentedly depart; and according to the course of Providence, let one Generation make room for another. Where is the Wise Man, that if it were offer'd him at the last gasp, to live his *Life* over again, and to run through all the smother of his Mother's Belly, the crudity and folly of his Infancy, the terrors of his Childhood, the hazards of his Youth, the cares of his Riper State, and the laborious irksomnesses of Old Age: Where is the Wise Man, I say, that would accept of *Life* again upon these Terms? Let us therefore consider whether we are going, and what we leave behind us. If we were in despair of a better *Life*, we might then be pardon'd the dread we have of the end of this. The Truth of it is, we have mispent our *Time in Vanity and Sin*, without laying up any thing

thing in this World, to give us a hopeful prospect of the next; we shoud not otherwise stand trembling on the brink of Eternity. If it were not for Death, a good Man had better never have been born.

V. No Man entertains Death so chearfully, as he that has been a long time preparing himself for it; for frequent Meditation makes it familiar and easie to us, (I had almost said, and welcome.) It is not the number of days and years that makes a long Life, but a well composed Mind; a Soul that rejoices to think of leaving the Body, and returning to him that gave it. *He that dies well, has liv'd long enough; and no Man can fail of dying well, that has liv'd well.* He that would die in Peace, must wean himself from all the satisfactions of this World beforehand. What has he to fear, that has already stript himself of more than Death could have taken from him? If we would make Life pleasant, we must cast off all care of that too, and then let Death come in any shape and welcome, whether we are dispatch'd by a Sword, or a Fever, it is the same thing. No Man is so happy both in Life and Death as he that can every day say to himself, *I have liv'd;* for all that follows, is another Life to him in surplusage. *He that would live comfortably, must die daily.*

C H A P. XXIX.

Of Magnanimity. The Description of a magnanimous Man.

I. **M**agnanimity is an Heroical Virtue, of an indefatigable force, and undaunted courage, and never without some glorious design:

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There is somewhat extraordinary, methinks, in the very sound of it. If it were not for this Virtue, most of the rest would fall short of their ends, for want of Resolution to grapple with the difficulties they are to encounter. This is it that inspires us with great and generous Inclinations, that animates and supports us in all hazards and extremities, and, with God's Assistance, breaks through all Oppositions, till it has plac'd us in the possession of what we desire. He that would make himself considerable, must offer at something that is so. *The more Danger the more Honour. Man, when he is truly himself, can do more than we think for.*

II. Great Minds are always intent upon great matters: Not what the common People call great, for that they look upon as despicable. Their care is to do things that are honourable in the sight of their own Consciences, but whether the World gives or refuses them the Honour they deserve, it matters not; unless in case where duty, or the glory of God requires the contrary. Their business is Virtue, not Ostentation; and the reward of well-doing, they find in the Action itself, without depending upon the Voice of the People. They are Eminent above others, and Invincible, and unalterably steady in all Fortunes; no Intruders into high places, but content in their own Stations. They are above Submissions and Entreaties to other People, for they need nothing but what they find in themselves. They know neither Fear nor Flattery; and when they put themselves forward, to be taken Notice of, it is not for Vanity Sake, but to justifie the Cause of Religion and Virtue. And yet in all this height of Spirit and Resolution toward Men, they are to God-ward the humblest
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and the meekest of all Mortals. To him it is that they ascribe all, from whom they have received all; acknowledging, that of themselves they have nothing, they can do nothing, they are nothing. Provided that a Man thinks soberly and humbly of himself, he may be allowed to take some delight (with modesty) in the good opinion of other people. It is not well to hunt or court Applause; but if it follows us, neither are we to reject it.

III. A great Mind presses to his end, thorow the thickest of his Enemies, and upon the very points of their Weapons, without any stop or hesitation. His Behaviour toward his Equals or Inferiors, is temperate and modest. Towards his Superiors, he is neither slavish nor insolent: He never passes the bounds of Decency and Respect; but on the other side, he is not to be trampled upon. Where he Loves or Hates, he owns it publickly, and takes the same freedom in his Actions and Discourses; for there is nothing in this World, that he either hopes for or fears. He does many things that other People do, but not the same way, and therefore he's upon the Reserve with the Multitude, for he takes no pleasure at all in their acquaintance. He does not willingly remember Injuries; and where they cannot be avoided, bears them without any complaints or submissions. There are not many that he commends, nor many that he would be commended by; but his care is nevertheless, to do things that are worthy of Commendation. No Man has him at his beck, but his Friend or his Superior. He wonders at nothing, and the reason is, he meets not with any thing which appears to him Great or New. In case of Accidents, he is safe within himself, and so the event of things never troubles him. In his motion,

motion, spirit and stile, he is grave, slow, steady and composed. He that has but little to do, may do it at leisure; and there is not much earnestness where a Man is content within himself.

C H A P. XXX.

Of Patience; the Occasions and Effects of it.

The Signs of it. An Exhortation to it;
with Instructions how to behave our selves
in Adversity. The necessity of Perseverance.

I. **P**ATIENCE is a Virtue that enables us to bear Adversity with Equality of mind; but because there are several sorts of Adversities, there are likewise several Names given to Patience, answerable to the variety of Evils which it is to be exercised upon. Patience, properly so called, is the Gift of bearing Injuries, without Perturbation, and with Courage. When it relates to the loss of Goods and Fortune, it is called *Æquanimity*: And that which keeps up the Heart, in the delays and disappointments of some expected Good, we call *Longanimity*. But the Virtue which fortifies us to all other purposes, and supports us in all Afflictions and Calamities, Foreign and Domestick, Publick or Private, is known by the Name of *Constancy*; the Virtue of all others that we have most occasion for. It is not for nothing that the Life of Man is called a *Warfare*, considering how we are beset with Adversities, and what troops of mischiefs break in daily upon us. Not a moment passes without an *Assault*, without a *Combat*; and if

if we had no Enemies abroad, we shoud yet find work enough to do with those in our own bosoms. We breed and we harbour Enemies within our selves, that crucifie and torment us. We come weeping into the World, and so we live in it, and so we leave it. It is the first thing we learn, and we can find Tears, when we are capable of nothing else. We have heard of divers that never laugh'd, but not of any Man yet that never wept; it concerns us therefore to arm our selves with Patience, without which we can neither be resolute nor perfect: No Man knows the value of it, 'till he reads it; that is to say, 'till he falls into Tribulation. *Never was any wise Man impatient.*

II. He that never experimented ill Fortune, has the more to fear. Physicians tell us, that there may be too good a habit of Body, and that nothing is! more dangerous than a Plethora. So at Sea, a dead Calm is the fore-runner of a Storm. If we lie under the lash of cross Accidents, we are not to reckon upon it as a Cruelty, or a Persecution; but a Contest: Without a Skirmish, there can be no Victory; and without a Victory, no Triumph. Now if Christ himself was to suffer, and so to enter into his Glory, shall we pretend to go scot-free, and be made Partakers of what another has purchas'd, *Gratis?* He that thinks to go to Heaven any other way, does most miserably deceive himself. *To do good, and to suffer ill, is the Sacramental Oath of a Christian.* To come now to the signs of a perfected Patience. He that has attained that point, bears whatsoever befalls him, without reluctance; he does not murmur under the rod, nor return evil for evil. He loves his Enemies, and prays for those that persecute him: He sees the hand of God in his Afflictions; and either

ther says nothing at all, or appeals only to Heaven for Relief, with a Submission to suffer whatsoever the Almighty shall see fit to lay upon him, with Joy and Thanksgiving. To conclude, * *It is a high Degree of Patience, to bear with the Imperfections of a weak Brother.*

III. In the Loss of worldly Goods, it is no small Comfort, to consider the frail and uncertain Condition of them. Whatsoever we possess, whatsoever we love, is naturally fugitive. It is with us indeed, but it is not properly ours: And we are not to fool our selves into a Passion for an imaginary Stability; we our selves are not firm to any thing, neither can we expect that any thing should be so to us, Virtue only excepted, which immortalizes even our Mortality; all other Things carry their Death along with them. Let us therefore keep a Distance betwixt our Possessions and our selves: For when they come to mingle and incorporate, he that takes our Estate, takes Heart and all. *A good Man cannot be properly said to lose any thing;* for whatsoever can be taken from him, is no Part of himself; but an Accessary or Circumstance, that whether it stays or goes, he esteems himself neither the richer, nor the poorer for. What a deal of Pudder we make, what Outcries and Lamentations, for the Loss of a Sum of Money, the Death of a Child, the firing of a House! but we can part with our Modesty, our Honesty, our Constancy, and never so much as change Colour for't: And yet here we lose a substantial good and what's our own too; whereas in the other Case we lose neither: Hethat grieves for such a Loss, deserves no better. If it were not for an inordinate Love, we should not account that we had lost any thing. What are outward Things to

the inward Man? Or what Correspondence betwixt Wisdom and Money?

IV. It would do very well, in whatsoever we go about, to take in all the Adjuncts that attend it, for there are many Circumstances, that for want of Fore-sight and Precaution, may come to trouble us. *I call my Servant*, it may be he's out of the Way, or does not do as I would have him. *I'm to make a Visit*, who knows but the Man may lock himself up? or shut the Door against me, and refuse to be seen? Suppose this before-hand, and all's well. *It is the wambling of a nauseous Mind (the Ladies Disease) to stand pittering, because (forsooth) I could not be admitted, as well as such an one: I could not get so much as one Word with him: I was even crowded down to the lower End of the Table, &c.* He that is not affected with this, takes no Notice at all of it; and he that does not understand it to be meer Matter of Course, is a very great Stranger certainly to the Affairs of human Life: If we can amend it, let us: If not, let us bear it. We are apt to exclaim against the Malice, the Wickedness, the Impudence of the Age we live in: And we do very well in it, if we can but reform the World, and drive before us all the Fools and Knaves out of it. But if this will not be, we had even as good say nothing: It is no new thing for People to go on in their own Way: Why do we not rather turn the Blame upon our selves, for expecting any better? The World was never otherwise, nor ever will be; but Faults there must be, as long as there are Men.

V. He that labours under any Affliction, should consider, not so much what he suffers, as what he has done; and what he now takes for a Severity, will be then found to be a Mercy: And that it is laid

laid upon him by Almighty God, for his good; that is to say, that God chastises him to humble him, try him, harden him, and bring him to himself. They that take their Fill of Pleasure in this World, are commonly reserved for Torments in the next. He that wallows in Abundance and Plenty, who knows how he would behave himself in a Condition of Want and Penury? or with what Constancy any Man would abide the Rage and *Odium* of the People, that has grown old in the Enjoyments of Popular Honour and Applause? We are forward enough to offer Consolation, and give good Counsel to others in Distress: Why do we not rather apply to our own Discontents, and turn the Advice upon our selves? In the Case of the Body, we can part with a Limb to a Surgeon, and give him Thanks too, and a Reward for his Pains: *Affliction is God's Remedy*, and no less necessary to the Soul, than burning or starving is to the Body: And yet here We are apt to mutter and repine; and to mistake that for a Loss or Misery, which both in the Intention, and in the Effect, is a Cure. If Poverty, Sicknes, and whatsoever else we call Evil, might but be suppos'd to enter into an Expostulation, and should ask, *Gentlemen, what's your Quarrel to us? What Hurt have we done you? have we taken away any of your Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, or any thing else that was good, and you could call your own? May you not live as merrily with us, as without us?* We must lay our Fingers upon our Mouths, and answer only in Silence. The Matter duly weighed, we take Good for Evil and Evil for Good. And *the greatest of our Misfortunes is our Impatience.*

VI. In another Bodies Case one may dissemble a Resolution and Constancy of Mind, but hardly

in our own. *We are to weep with those that weep;* but though our Tears be in common, it does not follow, that the Cause of them must be so too. We are, as much as in us lies, to comfort and succour the afflicted. If any Man does us an Injury, let us consider, that, *Every thing has two Handles; a right and a wrong;* and take it by the right, *The Man is unjust.* If we take it by that Way, there follows Animosity and Violence. But then on the other Side, *he's one for whom Christ died; redeem'd by the same precious Blood with our selves, and called out to the same Glory.* The turning of our Thoughts this Way, quiets all. We likewise pass this Reflection upon it; in the Matter of Reproof, we may sooner hear the Truth from an Enemy, than from a Friend; for it is his Busines to find Faults and to explore our Infirmities, even more than we do our selves. If we do any thing that we should not do, or neglect any thing that we should do, we shall be sure to hear of it from him, and to have the Town ring on't. Let us therefore make Profit of his Enmity, and look to our selves; we shall be the more circumspect, when we know that we have a Spy upon us.

VII. *Perseverance is the Crown and Perfection of all Virtues. The Reward is promis'd to Beginners, but is deliver'd to those that persevere.* Wherefore above all Things, let us be firm to our selves. In the mounting of a steep Hill, if we come once to stop, we slip; and instead of standing our Ground, we slide down again. Let us resolve what we are to do, and pursue it; for 'tis to no Purpose at all, to do any thing by fits. It is a great Weakness of Mind, to be always upon the Ramble, and in quest of new Company, new Exercises, new Places; when the Fault's in our selves, not in the Climate,

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or other Circumstances. The Plant that's often removed, withers; and the very Change of Remedies, turns into a Disease. If the blessed Apostle found himself at a Loss, in the Contemplation of his Duty; What will become of us then, whose Virtues are scarce comparable even to his Imperfections? The Love of Learning is never to be extinguish'd. The Love of Riches never to be satisfied. The Love of Honour never to be allay'd: So that there's no end of our Greediness after things that are in themselves short-liv'd and uncertain; but when we come to the divine and everlasting Wisdom, the least Touch and Relish of it cloy's us. This is not according to his Precept, that says, *Be you perfect as our Heavenly Father is perfect.* He that looks up to that Pattern, shall never want Place for the Increase of his Virtue.

C H A P. XXXI.

Of Temperance; How much Modesty contributes to it.. Of Abstinence and Chastity.

I. **T**HE Pleasures that arise from the Taste and Touch, are under the Government of Temperance; which only approves of those that are necessary and according to right Reason; and declares against all that's Artificial and Superfluous. The infallible Rule she proceeds by, is this: To take that for a Measure in what concerns the Body, which Nature has made necessary; and never for Pleasure sake, to admit of any Pleasure. This is it that keeps a Man from degenerating into a Beast: To this of Temperance, the Virtue of Modesty does very much conduce. It is the Bridle

of corrupt Motions, the Index of good Nature, the Guardian of Purity, the Witness of Innocence: Where Modesty has taken Possession, there enters not so much as an unclean Thought; much less an unlawful Act. It teaches us to stand in Awe of the Presence of God within us, and of our own Consciences; and charms us with the Contemplation of those Celestial Beauties, that illustrate all the Works of Temperance. The Man that is truly and perfectly Modest, will not indure so much as the Name of Intemperance; his House serves him only for a Covering, not a Concealment; as it does to some others, who lock themselves up, not that they may live more securely, but Sin more privately. But alas! what does it avail us to shun the Eyes, and the Ears of Men; when God sees us; and our Consciences accuse us.

II. The Virtues of moderating the Use of Meat and Drink, we call Abstinence and Sobriety: But as to what concerns the Touch, we call it Chastity and Modesty. In the use of Meats, it is no easie thing for a Man to keep himself within the Bounds of bare Necessity; for the Belly has no Ears, hears no Counsel, and will be still craving and calling upon us for daily Relief; but at how easie a Rate we might discharge our selves of that Importunity, not one Man of a thousand takes into his Thought. Instead of gratifying the Necessities of Nature, we are on the other side putting a Force upon her, to make her subservient to us in our Luxury; by irritating that Hunger and Thirst with artificial Provocatives; which should rather have been laid and pacified, by Remedies Plain and Natural. The Virtue of Chastity is yet of greater Difficulty among so many Incentives to Lust, without the singular Grace of God. We must

must keep our selves out of all Temptations; set a Guard upon our Senses, and preserve a profound Reverence for our selves, for he that has no Respect for himself, will hardly have it for any Body else. Let us have a Care of our Eyes; for *many a Man has been engag'd, e'er he was aware, to Love in spite of his Heart.* If it be Beauty, or Woman, that we love, there is nothing certainly in the World, that is so false and fading. Take her in all her Charms and Glories, and 'tis but the Work of one single Moment, to turn all her Graces into Deformities, all her Sweetness into Corruption, and her very self into worse than Nothing. We must fly ill Company too, and Idleness, and mortifie our Bodies by Fasting and Discipline. *In a very ill Condition is the Soul of that Man, that takes too much Care of his Carcass.*

C H A P. XXXII.

Of Meekness and Clemency: The Excellency, and the Duties of both.

I. **I**T is the Office and the Property of Meekness or Gentleness, to moderate the Violence of Anger, and keep it within the Limits of Humanity and Reason. Anger is as a Sword in the Hand of Nature, for the Terror and Punishment of Offenders. Now it is as great a Cruelty to spare all, as to spare none; for Impurity gives an Encouragement to Villany. When Matters are come to an Extremity, and that Justice is to be done upon a Malefactor, there is yet Place for Meekness and Clemency; and we are to shew a Kind of Unwillingness and Compassion, even

where there is a *Necessity* of Punishment. We are grievous Sinners our selves, and as God hath dealt with us, so are we to behave our selves towards others, that is to say, with Tenderness and Forbearance, in hope of Amendment. God Almighty does not always proceed to Severity, but contents himself many Times with our Repentance. It is a Disparagement to the Physician to despair of the Patient; for according to his Kindness and Skill, weare to judge of the Facility of the Cure. Gentleness of Nature to Anger, is like a Rock to the Sea, it breaks the Fury of it. The Billows may rage and foam, but the Rock stands firm, and they do but dash and spend themselves against it to no Purpose. *Come unto me and learn of me;* says our blessed Saviour. And what are we to learn? Not to cure the Sick; cleanse the Lepers; give Sight to the Blind; or raise the Dead. But *learn of me,* says he, *for I am meek.* Such is the Excellency of Meekness, as if the whole Duty of Christianity were comprehended in that Lesson.

II. As Meekness moderates Anger, so Clemency moderates Punishment. The one is compatible to all Men, the other belongs properly to Princes and Magistrates, in whose Power it is to mitigate the Severity of Laws upon Offenders, and which they are to do without any Respect to Fear, Profit, Friendship or the like; but purely upon a Principle of Generosity and Good-nature. Clemency is not only the Privilege, the Honour and the Duty of a Prince, but it is likewise his Security; and better than all his Garrisons, Forts and Guards, to preserve himself and his Dominions in Safety. When a Prince comes to be fear'd, he's hated; and when he comes to be hated, the People wish him out of the World. His Strength lies not so much in his Arms

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Arms and Magazines, as in the Hearts of his Subjects: For whoever contemns his own Life, is Master of another Man's. Many Executions are as great a Reproach to a Government, as many Funerals to a Physician. That Prince is truly Royal, who masters himself; looks upon all Injuries as below him; and governs by Equity and Reason, not by Passion. *The greatest Minds are ever the most Serene and Quiet.*

C H A P. XXXIII.

Of Modesty, Studies and Divertisements.

I. **T**H E R E is not any Thing that does better become a well qualified Mind, than Modesty. It is the Beauty of Honesty, and the Check of Wickedness; and shews it self in the very Habit and Gesture, without a Word speaking: 'Tis a strange Discovery that a Man makes of himself, even in the smallest things; in a Look, a Smile, a Cast of the Eye, a particular Manner of Walking: But whatever the World may gather from these Circumstances, let us be sure that they may read Christianity in our Lives. In all our Motions, Gestures, Words, Countenances, there is a certain Gracefulness or Medium to be observ'd betwixt Affection and Effeminacy on the one side, and a Clownish Harshness on the other. True Modesty passes from the Mind into the Body, and influences all our External Actions, with its Internal Gravity of Manners. A modest Man is the lively Image of God; his very Looks compose us. There is both Beauty in it, and Benefit. There is a Modesty to be us'd in our very Cloaths, Household-stuff, Furniture, Number of Servants; which are all to be suited

suitèd to our Condition: These may pass for the Ornament's of our Bodies and Houses, but they are the Impediments of our Minds; why do we glory then in Misfortune and Vanity, and in the Multitude of our Distractions? A Man has as many Enemies as Servants: They are so many Spies upon him; their Business is to pry into our Actions, not to wait upon our Commands. They come humble into a Family; they grow insolent in it, and most odious when they go out of it.

II. There are two Ends of Studioisness: The one is to attemper the inordinate Desire of Knowledge; the other is to quicken and excite us, to the learning of things profitable and necessary: We are all of us given to be searching and curious, by Nature; who knows well enough the Beauty and the Artifice of her own Work, in the Structure of the Universe; and therefore has made us Spectators of it, that so much Excellency might not lie dead and fruitless in Solitude. But instead of improving this Goodness of Nature, we abuse it; and spend those Faculties upon impertinent and dangerous Curiosities, which were given us for nobler Ends. Wisdom does not consist in knowing much, but in knowing things that we are the better for; and those things, in the first place, that concern our Salvation: Not that I am against human Learning neither; provided, that a good Use be made of whatever we read toward the ordering of our Lives and Manners. In the reading of many Books, we are apt to take up a rambling Humour of skipping from one thing to another, and swallowing Abundance; but we digest Nothing. Whereas we should rather pitch upon some certain Authors, take what's good out of them; read them over and over, and study them, if we would have anything stick by us. Variety of reading, may be pleasant; but

but it is the steady and certain Application of our Studies that improves us.

III. And yet we are not to be so intent upon our Studies neither, as never to give our selves Breath and Respite: The Mind is to be sometimes unbent; for there is no living without Intervals of Rest. We see that in all Places there are Days of Recreation set a-part, by Authority, for the Refreshment and Relief of the People. Now the Mind may be several Ways diverted, according to the Disposition of the Person, and according to the Occasions. Some Peoples Thoughts and Spirits are rais'd by nothing more than a pleasant Walk in the open Air; others again are for the delight of Rivers and Groves; some for a Country Retreat, out of the Dust and Tumult of the City; others are for Hawking, Hunting, or the more harmless Sport, perchance, of Fishing. Nay, the very passing from one Study to another, as from Mathematicks, for the purpose, to a Consort of Musick, is a great Relief. Some are for Entertainments of Wits, as Comedies or honest Games, as Chess, Tables, &c. But nothing better than a cheerful and ingenious Conversation, that keeps it self within the Bounds of Honour and Modesty. Some there are of so sour and critical a Temper, so morose and unsociable; that they'd sooner be guilty of a mortal Sin, than of a Jest. Others, on the contrary, are never out of Company; but perpetually upon the Droll, and playing the Buffoons. Now these Extremes are stark naught, unless they be so qualified and temper'd that the one may serve as a Cure to the other. To be always in Company, or always alone, is not well; but when weare weary of the one, we may have Recourse to the other. And so it is with Labour and Idleness; when we are weary of Working, let us lie down

down and rest; when we are Sick of doing nothing, let's up and work. Some there are that have no Government over themselves at all; but when they are upon the fit of Sudying, Day and Night is too little for them, till they have read themselves faint and blind: And as soon as that Humour is spent, they fall into the con'rary Extreme of Dissolution and Laziness; and are as hard now to be reclaim'd from the one, as they were before to be diverted from the other. This comes to pass, because we proceed by Leaps, and fly from one Contrary to the other, for want of setting to our selves certain Rules and Bounds, which we are not to transgres. Excess, or the over-doing of any thing, is enough to turn even Good into Evil.

C H A P. XXXIV.

Of Humility; wherein it consists. The Knowledge of our selves. The true Character of an humble Man.

I. **H**UMILITY is a Virtue that comes from Christ himself, who publish'd it by his Doctrine, and taught it by his Example. Next to Virtues Theological and Intellectual, it holds the first Place; for it overthrows Pride, which is the Fountain of all Evil. It makes us acceptable to God, whose Communion is with the humble: Without this Foundation, our whole spiritual Building falls to the Ground. The Name of it, 'tis true, does not seem to import any great Matter; but it is the Virtue nevertheless, without which no Man can be either great or perfect. It is that which puts us upon Illustrious Exploits, without Danger of being put up; upon Difficulties and Hazards, without

out Fear; nay, and without so much as a Change of Countenance or Temper. Humility does not lie (as the People imagine) in the meer Contempt and Abjection of our selves; but also in the just and moderate Pursuit of Honour and Glory; of Glory, not for Ostentation, but for the Virtue it self, of which that Glory is the Reward; *all other Glory is false and spurious*, and not worthy so much as of his Thought, that knows the Value of Things, and perfectly understands himself. The humble Man knows too well, (to affect Honour in it) how little it is that he can contribute out of his own, to the Works of Virtue: Beside that, he is afraid of seeking even the Honour that he deserves, for fear of being insensibly drawn in, to covet more than his Due. There can be no less in despising of Honour, since it is great Honour to refuse it; and greater yet to contemn it.

II. The Reason why we are not humble is, because *We do not know our selves*: And we will sooner believe a Mistake in our own Breasts, than if it came to us from the furthest Quarters of the Earth. *What is Man?* a weak and fickle Body; a pitiful, helpless Creature, expos'd to all the Injuries of Time and Fortune; a Mass of Clay and Corruption, prone to all Wickedness, and of so perverse and depraved a Judgment, as to prize Earth above Heaven; Temporal Pleasures, before Eternal Felicities: *Every Man Living is altogether Vanity*. He is one of the most frail, one of the most furious, lustful and timorous Creatures of the Creation: What have we then to be proud of? considering our Misery and Shame, which we should most certainly consider, if we had but the least Spark in us. *We can never be perfectly humble, till we come to a perfect Understanding of our selves.*

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III. It is not enough for us to be humble, but we must be vile in our own Eyes, distrustful of our selves, and ascribe all Glory and Honour to God. He that is humble, takes Pleasure in the Contempt of himself, and is only proud of not being affected with Applause. He judges of himself by what's his own; and he values others, by what they have received from God; so that he always lessens himself in the Comparison. This is his Practice, to set his own Faults against his Neighbour's Virtues; by which Rule, the perfectest Man alive, shall think worse of himself than of another. He is obedient to his Superiors, not wedded to his own Will: He confesses his Infirmities; he bears all Indignities with Patience; he does any good Office, be it never so mean; he is neither singular nor talkative. He loves Privacy, without any Desire to be taken Notice of; he draws himself into a narrow Compass; and he places himself both above the World, and below it. He is modest and circumspect, and speaks little, but when he needs must, and that too with a Countenance, rather dispos'd to Sadness, than Mirth: One may read the Humility of his Heart, in his Outside; his Face is grave and modest; his Eyes cast down, like those of a guilty Person before the great Tribunal: And betwixt the Conscience of his Sins, and the Uncertainty of his Pardon, not daring to lift them up to Heaven: He stands afar off, with the Publican in the Gospel, crying, *Lord, be merciful to me a Sinner.* To conclude, he trembles at the Thought of himself; he despises the World, and all the Glories of it; for *the whole Earth is as Nothing to him that does not first over-value himself.*

C H A P. XXXV.

Of the State of the Perfect: The Image of a perfect Man. The End of a perfect Life is Union with God.

I. **H**E that wants Nothing, may be properly said to be perfect. And what can that Man want, who is cleans'd and purg'd from his Sins, beautified with all divine Virtues, whose Heart is set upon God, and his Soul united to him to Eternity? This is the Top of Christian Perfecti-on; and the last End of Christianity it self, to be united to him who is the End and Author of our Being. But it is not for Man to attain this End, without the special Aid and Assitance of God; and therefore there are but few that arrive at this Per-fecti-on; for there are not many that entertain the Grace when 'tis offer'd them: But however, some there have been in all Ages.

II. We may pronounce that Man perfect, whom we see unshaken in Dangers; untainted with Lusts; cheerful in Adversity; happy under Reproach; quiet in a Storm; Free, Equal, Con-stant, Resolute, Generous, Empty of himself, and Full of God; and so much above the Things of this World, that the Hopes and Fears which are the Anxiety of other People, do but serve him for Divertisement and Sport: His Comforts are out of the Reach of Violence; and his very Misfortunes are for his Good: He fears neither Disappointments nor Accidents: He values Things by the Nature of them, and not by Opinion: He sees the World at his Feet; he studies, contemplates, and despises it, with an invincible Tranquility of Spirit; and yet his

his Soul keeps still her Station, where she had her Original. It is with the Conversation of a good Man, as with the Beams of the Sun; which, tho' they strike the Earth, are nevertheless at the same time in the great Luminary that sends them; and so is the Soul of a perfect Christian in Heaven, at the same time that we enjoy his Company here below. His Mind is like the State of the World above the Moon, ever serene and quiet. He knows neither Defects nor Variations; all Ages serve him. The Sun it self does not look upon the World more impartially than he does; and without cumbering his Thoughts about many Things, he takes up his Rest in the Simplicity and Unity of God himself. He neither seeks nor wishes for any thing without himself; for he carries his Happiness in his own Breast. It is to God alone that he dedicates both his Actions and Life. He that walks by this Rule, knows what it is to be perfect.

III. It is not for Flesh and Blood to arrive at this pitch without his Helping-hand, who says, *Without me you are able to do nothing.* But there is likewise a Necessity of previous Dispositions. An intimate Union with God, is the Accomplishment of a perfect Life; and we must first cast off the Darkness of the Creature, e'er we presume to appear before him that dwells in an unaccessible Light. How shall any Man think to partake of the Joys of Heaven, so long as he carries the Corruptions of Earth and Flesh about him? Every Pleasure, every Vanity, every vicious Affection, is a Remora to him: It stops him in his full Course, endangers the whole Lading, and keeps him from his Port. *God is Unity, and takes no Joy in a Soul that is divided.*



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